



History of The Stoneham Fire Department

1725 - 1975

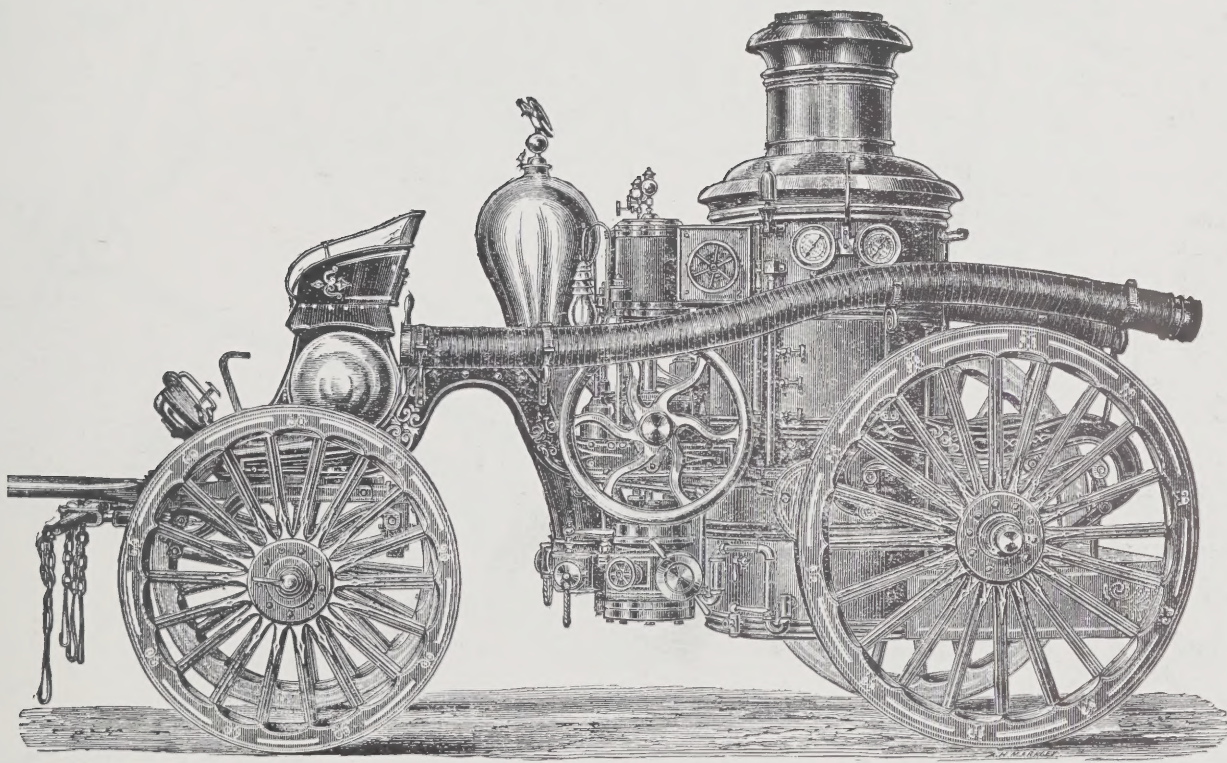


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Advancing the Line

History of The Stoneham Fire Department

1725 1975

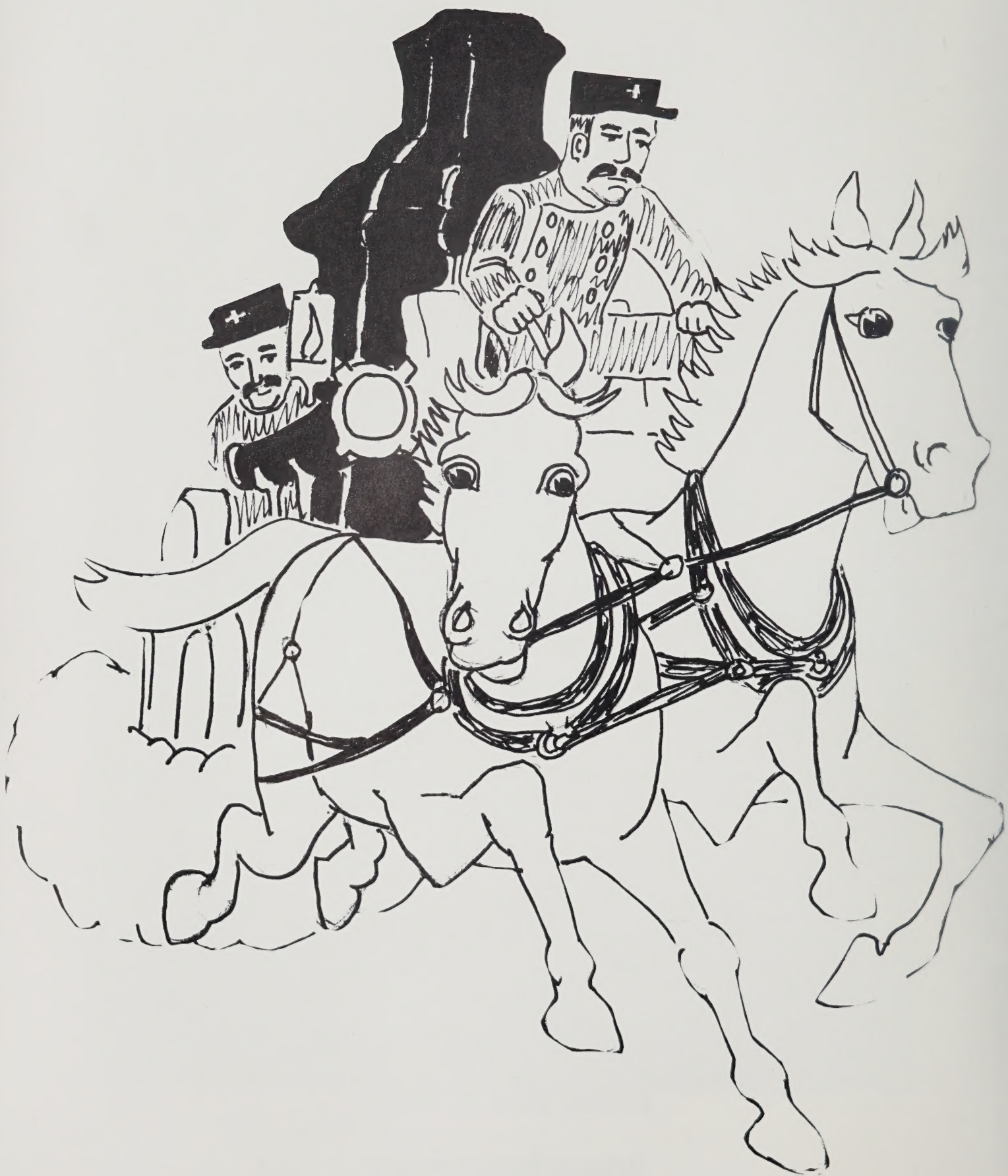


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Foreword

On this, the 250th anniversary of the founding of our Town, it is only fitting that recognition be given to the men that have had the responsibility of its' protection over these many years.

The Stoneham Fire Department has always taken pride in their efficiency, their service to the community, and their esprit de corps. Back in the 1800's, "Our Aim The Public Good" was the motto of the General Worth Engine Company and the Resolute Hook and Ladder Company cherished the words "Ever Loyal To The Call Of Duty".

Their dedication was demonstrated many, many times as they hauled their heavy apparatus, sometimes for miles, in order to protect someone's property, or their life.

They did this, generally, without remuneration and probably without much thanks. They were dedicated and likewise, so is the modern Stoneham Firefighter.

Today, the all paid Department must face many new technological advances and the yearly development of more hazardous products. Firefighting is listed as the most hazardous occupation in the United States.

It is to these Firefighters of history and to the men of today who will one day become part of the past, that this book is dedicated.

Chief Raymond L. Sorensen

History of the Stoneham Fire Department

Apparently there was little written of the fire protection in Stoneham from the founding of the Town in 1725 until about 1834. It can be assumed that fire protection evolved here, much as it did in Boston and surrounding communities.

The first real fighting equipment was a leather fire bucket usually about three gallons capacity. These buckets were used in the Bucket Brigade. This brigade consisted of two lines of townpeople stretched between the burning building and the nearest source of water. The able bodied men of the town passed the full buckets to the blaze, while the other line usually made up of women and children returned the empties to the water. When a fire did occur this bucket brigade was the only hope of saving the building. Unless the fire was discovered in its earliest stage, a total loss was inevitable.



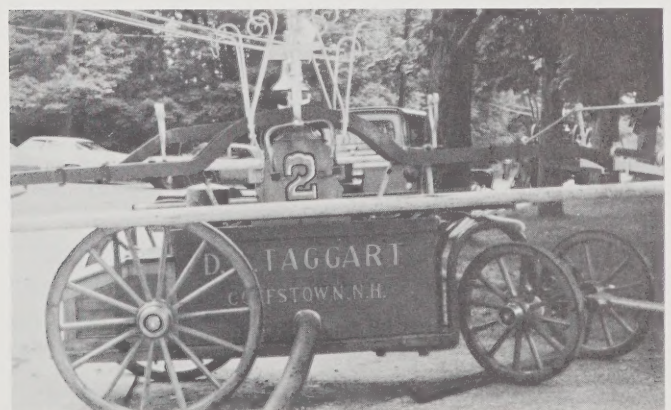
One of the Original Fire Buckets Used by the People of Stoneham in the Bucket Brigade.

In 1834 Stoneham bought its first piece of fire apparatus. This was a hand tub. Water still had to be supplied by the bucket brigade. The brigade would empty water into the tub of the engine, while the members of the volunteer company manned the brakes or handles. By pumping these handles the

water in the tub was forced through a nozzle attached to the engine onto the fire. This nozzle allowed water to be applied more directly and under greater pressure than was possible before. The engine was purchased second hand from a Mr. Thayer of Roxbury, Massachusetts for \$250 and was named the Phoenix. This name is interesting. Possibly it was taken from Mythology, where the great bird Phoenix rose out of the ashes. Whoever chose this name may have had a rather subtle sense of humor. For awhile this engine was an improvement over the bucket brigade. Any building fire, with any kind of a start, usually ended in a pile of ashes. A more likely explanation, if less interesting, is that this name was taken from the largest fire insurance company in America at the time. B. F. Richardson was the first Captain and hoseman of the Phoenix Engine Company and continued as Captain until the Town bought a new hand tub.

In 1849 the next Engine purchased by the Town was another hand tub. It was purchased for \$1,000 and named General Worth after a famous Mexican War General. This Engine was larger than the Phoenix and also included a suction hose which could be dropped into the nearest source of water. The water was then pumped through the engine onto the fire. The problem here was that the source of water had to be close enough to the fire for the suction hose to reach, or it was back to the bucket brigade.

In 1853 the Phoenix was taken apart by Mr. Richardson and the metal sold for scrap.



The General Worth Hand Tub – Now Called the D.A. Taggart and Still Used for Musters by Goffstown, N.H.

The first Hook & Ladder Truck was purchased in 1855. This truck was built in Stoneham by W. Ward Child and that man again, B. F. Richardson. It was named the Resolute.

B. F. Richardson must have been quite a man. Not only did he Captain the Phoenix and help build the Hook & Ladder Truck, he also had time to make two trips to California between 1849 and 1853. He returned to become a member of the Hook & Ladder Company. He later became the Town Fire Warden and the Chief Engineer of the Fire Department when it became more thoroughly organized in 1857. If there was such a person as the father of the Stoneham Fire Department, our vote would go to B. F. Richardson.

In 1857 the Fire Department was organized in the following manner: the Selectmen of the Town chose, as head of the Fire Department, a Board of Engineers. These Engineers were nominated by the members of the Volunteer Companies and were usually members of one of these companies. They served a one year term and had the authority to accept or reject any person nominated to be a member of any volunteer company. The board made rules and regulations governing the operation and conduct of the four companies. They also dispensed all monies allocated by the Town for the operation of the Fire Department.

1858 was the first year the fire calls in Stoneham were recorded. The Volunteers responded to eight fire alarms. Six of these calls were for fires in Reading. One was to Wakefield, and one was for a house fire in Stoneham.

August 11, 1863, the Gen. Worth Engine Company turned out for escort duty for the military company (Stoneham Light Infantry) of the 50th Regt. upon their return from the Civil War.

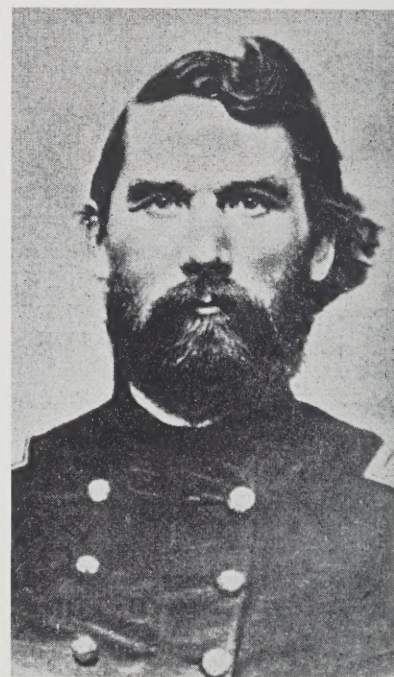
In 1864 the first injury sustained by a Firefighter was recorded. On August 3rd of this year, Henry Wiley lost his thumb in an accident while fighting a fire. Mr. Wiley was a member of the Gen. Worth Engine Co. The company at their next meeting voted to give Mr. Wiley \$15 for medical expenses, and for time lost from work.

The use of cotton hose was mentioned for the first time in 1865 when the Engineers purchased 500 feet of single jacketed cotton hose. All hose purchased until this point had been leather.

In 1865 there were 13 reservoirs located in different parts of Stoneham to be used in case of fire. These reservoirs were man made water supplies which were really little more than a large stone lined hole filled with water, constructed close to the street for easy access for the Engine Company. They were sometimes interconnected and the one in the Square contained 40,000 gallons of water. A new hose car-

riage was purchased and a new hose tower was constructed in the Town house. The Department owned 500 feet of cotton hose and 300 feet of leather hose. There was one fire in Town December 9th — Matthew Foley's shoe factory and part of a house. It cost the Town \$100 for expenses incurred while extinguishing the fire. These expenses included the colations enjoyed by the Volunteers after the fire had been extinguished, plus the cost of horses to pull the fire trucks to the fire scene.

The period from 1870 to 1891 was a time of great change, both for America and Stoneham. This is nowhere more evident than in the improvement of the Town's Fire Protection.



COL. J. PARKER GOULD

A Prominent Stoneham Resident Who Died A Hero in the Civil War. The Steam Fire Engine and Hose Company Adopted His Name.

The year 1870 was a costly one for the people of Stoneham in regards to fire protection. The Col. Gould, a Steam Fire Engine, was purchased by the Town from the Hunnerman Company of Boston. The same year, a building to house the Engine was constructed on Tidd Street. These two items alone meant a capital outlay of \$8,000. This must have been a very large investment at that time for a Town whose population was only 4,513. By the way, if you are looking for Tidd Street on a map, it isn't there any more. The Town Hall now stands where Tidd Street was located.

In 1870 a hose carriage was bought from Hunnerman Company to run with the Col. Gould. When

we say run, that is just what we mean — this carriage was designed to be pulled by the members of the hose company by hand.

The Col. Gould Engine and Hose Company was formed. At the same time the Gen. Worth Engine Company was reorganized and its membership cut to forty men. Most of the men cut from the Gen. Worth Company were appointed to the new Col. Gould Hose Company.



Col. Gould Engine House

On September 3, 1872 the Town's worst fire, up to this time, destroyed Forrest's Stable and Dunn's Boarding House. This fire took the life of Michael Welch, a boy of fifteen, who had come from Ireland.

In 1873 the Town purchased a Fire Bell and had it mounted in the new tower of the Col. Gould House. J. Sullivan was paid \$13 a year to ring in the fire alarms. A horse hose carriage was purchased from Hunneman Company to accompany the Gen. Worth Engine.

One hundred years ago, in 1875, the Stoneham Fire Department consisted of one Hook & Ladder Carriage; one Steam Fire Engine; one Hand Engine; one horse Hose Carriage, carrying one thousand feet of hose; one hand Hose Carriage, carrying eight hundred feet of hose and two Hand Carriages, carrying three hundred feet of hose. The Department had a total of twenty-eight hundred feet of hose. There were ninety-three members of the Department divi-

ded as follows:

W. H. Eastman, Chief Engineer
Moses Downs, Assistant Engineer
C. C. Dike, Clerk of Engineers
The Resolute Hook & Ladder Company —
twenty-five men, E. R. Seaver, Foreman
The Gen. Worth Engine Company — forty men,
G. E. Sturtevant, Foreman
The Col. Gould Steamer and Hose — twenty-five
men, Frank Gilbert, Foreman

The Department responded to fires five times in 1875. April 17th, R. R. Danforth's Paste Shop, Main Street — loss \$200; August 26th, a dwelling house on Cottage Street, owned by W. B. Stevens, fire in a feather bed — loss \$100; October 22nd, called to Reading for a fire in a cabinet making shop. November 5th fire, Charles Emerson's Shoe Factory — loss \$300; November 22nd, R. R. Danforth's barn, occupied by D. B. Gerry — loss \$200.

Located in the basement of the Town House was the Hook & Ladder Carriage, the Gen. Worth Engine and Hose Carriage, and one horse Hose Carriage. The Col. Gould and other Hose Carriages were housed on the corner of Tidd and Pine Streets.

Most of the hose purchased by the Department up to this time was made of leather. This hose was 2½ inches in diameter and 50 feet in length. The leather was stitched or riveted together by at least twenty-two copper rivets to the running foot. The total weight of each 50 ft. length was between 80 and 90 pounds. Leather hose will dry out if not oiled from time to time. The job of oiling the hose originally fell to the Chief Engineer but later, as the amount of hose grew, it was delegated to the Stewards of each Hose Company. To improve and simplify the process of oiling, a trough made of sheet iron was purchased by the Engineers in 1878. The trough was made in three 18 foot sections and had a total length of 54 feet. The 50 foot length of leather hose was then laid in the trough and neatfoot oil was applied with sponges.

In 1876 fires in Stoneham were by no means an everyday occurrence. There were two fires on July 4th of this year. One was for a roof fire at a house on William Street owned by Thaddeus Richardson. No cause was given but the date would lead one to believe fireworks might have been involved. The other was a house on Hancock Street owned by John McNamara. No doubt about this one. It was started by fire crackers. The next alarm in Stoneham was on February 16, 1877 for a fire in a house owned by Dennis Daley, located on Pine Street. The time be-

tween the two fires was 7 months and 14 days. On September 3, 1877 a fire at the R. C. Huntress Planing & Moulding Mill & Box Manufacturing Company located on Pomeworth Street, along the railroad tracks, destroyed the main building, causing \$25,000 damage. The Gen. Worth was badly scorched at this fire.

This year the Col. Gould Hose Carriage was changed from a hand carriage to a horse drawn carriage. At the same time the Company was reduced to ten men.

On August 6, 1880 the Currying Shop of M. H. Fitzgerald on Hancock Street and the adjoining house were destroyed by fire. The department was praised for its good work in protecting the neighboring houses. Woburn was called to help and arrived in 25 minutes which was considered very good time. Loss by fire was set at \$25,000.

1881 saw the purchase of a Hook & Ladder to replace the old Resolute. It was brought to Stoneham with much pomp and ceremony on July 2nd, the very day President Garfield was shot. In June of the same year, the Stoneham Fireman's Relief Association was formed to help any Fireman injured while on duty.

A horse Hose Sled, which carried 700 feet of hose, was purchased for winter duty and placed in the Col. Gould house.

The Col. Gould Steamer, Gen. Worth Engine and the Resolute Hook & Ladder Company all responded to a fire in the Wakefield Rattan Works on Water Street, Wakefield.

On October 21, 1883 the Engine House of B & L Railroad was destroyed by fire along with two steam engines — loss \$25,000.

The year 1883 brought some drastic changes to the Stoneham Fire Department. A new water system was introduced to the Town, the water being supplied by underground pipes from the Wakefield Water Works to 58 post hydrants located throughout the Town, and one Lowry hydrant head. The post hydrants had only one connection for Fire Department hose while the Lowry hydrant provided two outlets. This meant that no longer were the engines at the mercy of wells running dry or reservoirs being depleted. Now for the first time there was a steady supply of water available. While this supply was not adequate for all fire situations, or available in all areas of the Town, it was a giant step in the right



The 1881 Resolute H&L Truck Driver Is Lewis VanBuskirk. The Building Is The Old Town Hall and Center School. The Hook & Ladder and Hose 2 Were Quartered in the Basement of this Building.

direction. These hydrants were put to use quickly. Their first test was on December 1, 1883 when they were used to extinguish a fire at the Hill & Rowe Shoe Factory on Main Street.

With progress also comes some major changes. With the advent of the new water system, the engineers decided to reduce the size of the Volunteers. The Gen. Worth Engine Company was disbanded and the Hand Tub retired on December 18. The Gen. Worth Hose Company was immediately formed. The strength of the Company was cut from 54 men to 15. This was really the beginning of the end for the Volunteer companies. Although they lasted for 40 more years, it was always as smaller units. In the next few years, other companies were to feel the pressure of modernization.

1884 saw a major reorganization of the Fire Department. A committee was set up to make recommendations to the Town Meeting. Their recommendations were as follows:

First, recommend the Town approve of the action of the Engineers in disbanding the Gen. Worth Engine Company and putting the Engine out of commission.

Second, that the Col. Gould Steamer & Hose Company be reduced to fifteen men, this fifteen to include the Engineer and Assistant Engineer and Fireman.

Third, that no change be made in the Hook & Ladder Company.

Fourth, the Gen. Worth Company consist of twelve men, and the name changed to Gen. Worth Hose Company.

Fifth, that compensation of members of the Department shall be as follows: Chief Engineer, \$50; Assistant Engineer, \$30. The Board to consist of three members: Engineer of Steamer, \$30; Stewards of Gen. Worth and Col. Gould Hose Companies, \$150, including care and cleaning of hose, said amount to be apportioned by the Engineers; the Clerks of the Company, \$20 a year.

Members of this Committee were Onslow Gilmore, O. A. Dodge, Amos Hill, E. R. Seaver, W. F. Walker, M. J. Ferren and Thomas Grady.

The Town accepted this report and the reorganization of the Department. So in less than two years the Department went from 98 men to 52 men.

The Town also discontinued the purchase of leather hose at this time.

In 1885 the old Gen. Worth Engine was sold to the Town of Goffstown, New Hampshire. This En-

gine is still retained by the people of the Town, much to their credit and our regret. Were it only possible that we could buy it back for the \$185 for which we sold it.

A Lowry hydrant head was purchased and for convenience of access, was kept in the cellar of W. R. Gordon, Central Square.

1886 saw an even further reduction in the seemingly ill-fated Gen. Worth Company. Their ranks were cut to only nine men. The Town purchased a new horse Hose Carriage, the E. R. Seaver No. 3 built by T. T. Marston of Stoneham, at a cost of \$330. This was located on Washington Street in a hose house built by the Town. This new Company had ten men and was probably the reason for the further decline of the Gen. Worth Company.

July 12, 1889, a nine year old boy named James Murphy died in a house fire on Hancock Street. On November 28th of this year, the Col. Gould and Gen. Worth Hose Companies went to a fire in Boston with sixteen men.

Mr. Wall built a new Hose Wagon for the Gen. Worth Company.

1890 saw the introduction of an Electric Alarm System to Stoneham. It was a Gamewell System comprised of 17 alarm boxes, and a whistle machine for a gong on the Sanborn & Mann Factory. A bell striker was provided for the bell on the Congregational Church. The system went into use in November and the first recorded box alarm was on November 26th from Box 27 for a fire in the woods on Franklin Street, near what was called Dogtown. The first false alarm was recorded on the same day from Box 65.

In 1891 the old Col. Gould, now twenty-one years old, was replaced by a new steam fire engine. This was an impressive piece of apparatus designated as a second size Engine. It was fully nickle plated and was built by Manchester Locomotive Works of New Hampshire for \$3,500 and the old Col. Gould.

By 1891 the Town of Stoneham had comprised a rather formidable fire fighting unit, which included one Amosheag Steam Fire Engine (the Col. Gould); the Resolute Hook & Ladder Truck No. 1; the Gen. Worth Hose Carriage No. 2 (horse drawn) which carried 1000 feet of hose; the Col. Gould Hose Wagon No. 1 (hand or horse drawn) which carried 600 feet of hose; the Gen. Worth Hose Wagon No. 2 (hand drawn) which carried 500 feet of hose, a life saving chute and life net; the E. R. Seaver Hose Carriage No. 3 (horse drawn) carrying 1000 feet of hose. The Hook & Ladder and Gen. Worth Hose Carriage and Hose Wagon were kept in rooms located in the base-



The J.P. Gould fire engine (Amoskeag make), used by the Stoneham Fire Department until 1925. It was operated by steam generated from kennel coal and had a capacity of 750 gallons. Its engineer, Samuel Trull, togged out in rubber coat and black hat with broad rim down over his ears, made a picturesque figure, as he manipulated the engine under a shower of sparks and cinders. Stillman Crouch was its last operator with Herbert Patchett and later Fred Peterson as the stokers.

Its last big fire was the Symmes Block fire in 1920. Previous to that it saw service at the Dike Ice house fire in 1919; at the Sanitarium barn fire in 1917 and at the Outram barn fire in 1916.



ment of the Town Hall or Town House. This building later became the Central School and was located on land now occupied by the present Town Hall.

The Col. Gould was kept in the house built by the Town for its predecessor. This building now located on Pine Street is used by the Public Works Department.

The Fire Department owned no horses but had a contract with James Forrest to use his horses to pull the steam engine to fires for \$200 a year. B. B. Batcheller received \$3 for each alarm for the use of his horse in pulling the Resolute. Tredick Bros. provided a supply wagon for each alarm at \$3 each. Levi Hill's horse was used to pull the Gen. Worth Hose Carriage for \$100 a year.

With a total of 65 men in the Department, together with steamer, wagons, carriages and horses, it must have been an impressive sight when an alarm was sounded in Stoneham during the 1890's.

On July 12, 1894 a fire in the G. H. Eaton Company factory on Pomeworth Street, destroyed the factory and damaged two nearby houses.

This year the Department had the harnesses for

the horses hung from the ceiling of the station. The horses would be moved under the harnesses and a man would pull a cord, dropping the harnesses on the horses backs. The collar was then snapped into place, and off they would go. This arrangement was called a "Quick Hitch". (Over the years the meaning of quick hitch has changed and now is used for the boots, pants and suspenders arrangement used by fire fighters when answering an alarm at night). In this way, several minutes were saved in hitching up the horses.

In 1895, because of the ability of the new steamer to produce much greater water pressure, the Department found it necessary to discontinue the use of the single ply cotton hose. This created another problem. Because of the new and much heavier two ply hose, the hose reel of Hose No. 3 was unable to carry more than 400 feet.

In 1896 the fire gong was moved to the W. M. Tidd Company building from A. E. Mann. A New Hose Wagon (hand drawn) was purchased to replace the Hose Carriage No. 3. It was built by Abbott Downing Company of Concord, New Hampshire and became the new E. R. Seavers.



The E. R. Seavers Hose Wagon

During the 1890's there was a need for continual repair of all hose houses of the Department. This was especially true of the wooden floors caused by the constant wet conditions. During this same period large amounts of the Fire Department Hose was being used by the Sewer and Highway Department.

The people of the South end of Stoneham asked that a Hose Carriage be located in their area. The Engineers suggested that Hose No. 2 be moved from under the school house and placed in the area. It would appear the recommendation fell on deaf ears, for this was never done.

In 1899, because of the constant use of its hose by the Sewer and Highway Department, the Fire Department found itself in great need of new hose. There was now such a small amount of hose in service, that it required six to eight weeks before an entire change of hose could be made. During this time the hose used at fires had to remain in the carriages soiled and wet, thereby causing more damage to the hose, the carriages and the floors of the houses.

May 4, 1900, the Department was called to Wakefield for a fire at the Wakefield Rattan Works. The Col. Gould, Hose No. 4 and Ladder 1 responded. This building had been completely rebuilt after a disastrous fire in 1881.

1901, the Fire Alarm system was cut into two circuits so that in the event of accident to one part of the system, the whole system would not be out of operation.

On April 1, 1902, the Hotel Langwood at Spot

Pond was destroyed by fire. The following article is from the Stoneham Independent:

"The magnificent Hotel Langwood located in the Middlesex Fells, Stoneham, was burned to the ground yesterday afternoon, entailing a loss of about \$100,000. The insurance is said to be \$50,000. The structure contained 150 rooms was unoccupied, but would have been re-opened May 5th, by Dr. C. H. Cogswell of Boston as a Sanitarium.

When Chief Sturtevant reached the scene, he directed his men to save the main building. Word was then sent to Melrose for assistance. Before the out of town firemen arrived, the main building was a mass of flames. Sparks and embers were being driven against the walls and roofs of the adjoining cottages, the stables and Stone Mansion House.

The firemen, though they worked intelligently, could not direct water into the big four-story structure in sufficient quantities to quench the roaring furnace.

When the Chief realized that the building was doomed, he instructed his men to wet down the Stone Building on the southerly corner of the hotel adjoining it. For a time it was doubtful if this measure would prove successful owing to the great quantity of blazing wood that was showering upon the premises. The firemen worked amid danger of toppling walls and were somewhat hampered by the crowd that had collected on the grounds.

The all out was sounded at 1:47 A.M.



Until now the Engineers at Tidd Factory had been paid \$50 per year to supply steam to blow the gong for fires. In 1901 this charge was increased to \$200. The Town decided it would be more economical to purchase a compressor Air Plant for this purpose.

July 5, 1903, 1:02 A.M., Box 62 was struck for a fire which started in the Hayward & Litch Stable on

Central Street. Before this fire was brought under control, it had destroyed Carlin's Market, Glidden's Fish Market, Marcey's Bakery, Pinkham's Carriage Shop and a Chinese laundry. The area from Block to Emerson Street was completely gutted. Eight horses perished in this fire. Apparatus from Woburn, Reading, Wakefield, Melrose, Malden and Winchester responded. Here again, the date strongly suggests fireworks may have been the cause.



Aftermath of the July 5, 1903 Fire



A Group of Volunteers Who Battled the Central Street Fire on July 5th.

Stoneham Daily Enterprise.

Vol. Nine.

STONEHAM, MASS., TUESDAY, July 7, 1903.

Price One Cent

Loss About \$35,000.

Firemen Do Herculean. Brave work.

Everyone Praises the Great Work Performed.

At 1 o'clock Sunday morning an alarm was rung in from Box 63, followed at once by a second alarm, and the firemen responded promptly as promptly, we are told by one of the first men on the scene—as a permanent fire department. They found before them a fierce and raging fire under complete headway and ruin of the buildings in the Square, bounded by Central, Block Fuller and Emerson streets staring them in the face. Chief Sturtevant thought quickly and sensibly that it was wisdom to concentrate special efforts in saving the big factory of the T. H. Jones Shoe Co., and the old factory occupied by the Longmore Bros., the back of which were in great danger of ruin. He acted quickly, and it was a miracle he was so successful. This work of the firemen at this time meant a great deal to Stoneham. It saved the largest industrial establishment of the town, and made it possible for nearly 600 people to work today. It needed determination, nay bravery and skill, to stand and face the music of that roaring hell of fire, and the local firemen were equal to this great emergency, seven good streams being directed to the two factories. They were aided greatly by the automatic sprinklers turned on by Engineer Thurston of the Jones factory.

Despite their great efforts, the firemen needed assistance at once, and calls were made on Woburn, Reading, Wakefield, Melrose, Malden and Winchester, all of whom responded with steamers, hose wagons and hook and ladder trucks. Woburn came up in 14 minutes, Wakefield in 11m., and Malden came in with their steamer in 30m. and then the work in saving the rest of the property in so large an area was planned and carried out, and at

8.30 the all out signal was sounded relieving the tired firemen of their arduous labors. Many pipemen had their hands badly burned, so close were they to the raging flames.

The fire was going at 12.15; as persons heard the roaring of flames as they came past the scene from the late train.

The origin of the fire was in the wagon shed back of Carlin's. Chief Sturtevant doesn't know whether it was incendiary or accidental, but a man on the scene attributes the cause to irresponsible carelessness.

Officer Small carried Henry Marshall out of the tenement over Carlin's, to Aaron Hill's piazza.

Fourteen buildings were destroyed and the back and roof of the Jones factory and the old factory were badly scorched.

Most of the buildings destroyed were small wooden structures, and the place was always considered a fire-trap. With few exceptions, the buildings and contents were covered by insurance.

While the wind was fanning the flames, northeasterly and northerly, Chief Sturtevant maintained his stand to save the factories, it proved the most sensible.

The Litch & Hayward stable on Block street, where the fire originated, is a total loss, with its contents of nine fine horses, harnesses, wagons, large lot of hay, &c. Only one horse was saved, the gray mare the best of the two steamer horses. John McKeuna and Ralph Rugeri leaping into the burning furnace and bravely saved the animal. They had hold of two others but they fell through the floor. Litch & Hayward's loss was \$5000, partially insured. The firm will rebuild at once.

The fire burned out C. B. Carlin's grocery store, Mrs. Marshall's

tenement, the old fruit store, Trombeta's barber shop.

The stables and Carlin's grocery store were a part of the Emery estate, and C. B. Melvin owned the buildings occupied by Wall and Stevens. His loss is \$1000. Carlin's loss on stock, etc. is \$1000, insured; Litch & Hayward \$5000, partially insured; the Emery estate \$3500; Richard Wall \$2000, uninsured; Smith & Webber \$1200, insured and Thomas Shea \$500.

Along Central street an unoccupied store belonging to the Emery estate, E. O'Donnell's plumbing establishment, an unoccupied house of Henry Marcy, a building in the rear of Litch & Hayward's stable, a Chinese laundry corner of Central and Emerson streets, and a tenement house owned by Everett Westcott of Melrose were burned down. Westcott's property is valued at \$3000, insured for \$2400. A Mrs. Gartland and several lodgers lived in the tenement and lost all their belongings. Their loss will amount to several hundred dollars. E. O'Donnell carried but \$200 insurance. His total loss is \$600; John Meagher's loss is \$75.00.

The flames also swept unchecked down Emerson street to Fuller St., destroying the large barn next to the Westcott property owned by the William T. Brown heirs, valued at \$2950, insured; two dwelling houses owned by O. A. Leaver of Boston, Peter L. Doucette's residence, corner of Emerson and Fuller streets, and badly damaging a house owned by the Misses Fuller across the street, and occupied by R. W. Nevers. Extensive repairs had just been completed upon the Fuller house. The loss is \$2000, insured. Seaver's loss will amount to several thousand dollars, partially insured. In one of the buildings burned, adjacent to the Doucette house, Mark Woolbridge lived.

Mrs. Woolbridge was overcome by the heat and smoke while endeavoring to save her property she was taken to the office of a nearby physician in an unconscious condition. Her injuries are not serious. The occupants of these several dwelling houses on Emerson street were able to save but few of their personal effects, and their loss will be considerable.

Peter Doucette's shoeshop, fronting on Fuller street was badly gutted, entailing a loss of about \$750, partially insured. His barn, owned by O. A. Leaver was also a total loss.

The old Colahan factory occupied by Moses Hall was slightly damaged

by fire and water.

The T. H. Jones factory suffered but little damage. Supt. Buzzell and Miss Carrie Robinson and many of the employees were early on the scene.

The buildings on the west of Central street are slightly damaged by water and the windows are broken from the intense heat.

Until the insurance is adjusted nothing definite can be learned of the exact loss.

Newsboys' Reception.

Mrs. C. Fannie Allyn tendered all the newsboys of the town a reception July 4th from 6 to 11 a. m. Mrs. Allyn served the boys with all the ice cream and cake they could hold, and presented historic pictures which many of the boys will keep as souvenirs of the memorable occasion.

Herbert Patchett was hit in the stomach with a hammer while working as fireman for the Col. Gould steamer.

The paper boys reaped a good harvest yesterday. Every boy gets half a cent for each paper he sells.

Meade, the Stoneham polo player is a good second baseman. He is struck on the Stonehams.

The Phelps Motor Co. factory and the Emerson factory caught fire several times.

And now it appears that John McKenna took out the gray mare alone. John is to receive all the credit for the brave act.

If we could only arrange for the Fourth to come on a Saturday every year how happy everybody would be.

Japanese Lanterns

—AT THE—

Enterprise Office.

The Engineers of the Department suggested that the Town consider building a Central Fire Station because of the increasing and seemingly never-ending cost of repairing the old wooden houses that the Fire Department maintained. Almost every year it was necessary to repair or completely replace the floors of one or more horse houses.

In 1904 a new two horse Hose Wagon was purchased to replace Hose No. 1. This wagon was designed to carry a chemical tank, but because of the added expense, the tank itself was not purchased until 1905.

November 26, 1907, the first automobile fire was recorded in Stoneham for an auto belonging to Dr. Sheahan on Pine Street.

April 2, 1908, Stoneham responded to a call for help from Chelsea. They left Stoneham at 5:25 P.M. and did not return to Town until 3:20 P.M. on April 3rd.

1908 was a rather unlucky year for the Stoneham Fire Department. On November 13th, there was a fire in the Shawmut Motor Company factory located on the corner of Pine and Tidd Street. This fire, which started with a gasoline explosion in the Shawmut factory, destroyed several houses and stables. The Fire House of the Hook & Ladder and Hose Company No. 2, which was located under the Central School, was also damaged when the conflagration spread to the school building. Also lost in this blaze was 1000 feet of hose. A lack of water pressure was blamed for the inability of the Department to contain this blaze.

Stoneham may have lost even more than a few

buildings in this fire because the Shawmut Motor Company was building its own automobile right here in Stoneham. The owners were never able to acquire enough money to rebuild, thus killing our chances of becoming the Detroit of the East Coast.

As if the fates wished to add insult to injury to the Stoneham Fire Department, the E. R. Seavers Hose House on Washington Street was damaged by a fire on December 6th, that same year.

March 5, 1909, Stoneham went to Reading for a church fire. Steamer and Hose Company responded. Just nineteen days later, Stoneham had its own church fire. The Methodist Church was destroyed by fire. Wakefield and Winchester responded. We don't know what happened to Reading! 1909 had its share of large fires — one in the High School Chemical Lab. and another in the Glue Works on Maple Street.

The fires were not always so dangerous. One fire must have caused more laughter than tears. Box 63, fire in an outhouse on Franklin Street in rear of W. R. Usher's building. Cause: unknown — Damage, slight!

July 10, 1910 first alarm of fire received over telephone (brush fire, Shumway Circle).

The Department started replacing the old fire alarm cable. This year three miles were replaced.

September 24, 1910, the Farm Hill Elevator burned to the ground. The fire raged for 12 hours on property of the Vera Chemical Company.

April 11, 1911, Chief Engineer George E. Sturtevant died. He had been a member of the Volunteers for forty-seven years, nineteen of which had been as Chief Engineer.



A View of the Vera Chemical Company Fire — 1910



COMBINATION A TAKEN IN FRONT OF PRESENT FIRE STATION

Driver, Stillman Crouch on Ladder. (Left to right) Unknown, Herb Plummer, Bon Willett, Frank Flowers, Unknown. In Front of Truck (left to right) Joseph Tansey, Sam Bruce, William McCall, Unknown.

1912 was a banner year for the Stoneham Fire Department. The Town purchased a Seagrave Combination Hose and Chemical Wagon. The purchase of this piece of apparatus was not taken lightly, for this was a motorized Fire Truck. Much soul searching, and many hot and heavy discussions, took place before a final decision was reached. Even after final approval of this new vehicle, some sound advice was given for its operation.

Report of the COMMITTEE FOR PURCHASE OF COMBINATION AUTO FIRE TRUCK

Soon after appointment your committee met and organized with selection of George R. Barnstead, chairman, and E. L. Patch, secretary.

The secretary was instructed to correspond with the Fire Commissioner of Boston and with the departments of many other cities and towns to ascertain what auto apparatus they had in use, the cost of main-

tenance, their practical utility and value to the fire protection of their communities.

There was much diversity of opinion as to the value of different makes, all agreed that auto apparatus was a valuable addition to any fire department. Cost of maintenance depended largely upon the character and ability of the men handling the apparatus, being three or four times as much in some cases as in others,—A cool-headed, practical driver and caretaker preventing accidents and excessive repairs.

Your committee has held many meetings at which, as a rule, every member has been present.

Among others they considered the merits of the LaFrance, Knox, Peerless, Kelley, Webb, Packard, Pope-Hartford, Locomobile, Rambler and Seagrave machines.

It was voted not to entertain the offers of any company who could not present one of their machines for trial on the town streets. The manufac-

turers who agreed to do this were invited to meet with the committee, present plans and specifications and explain the merits of their apparatus. This confined the competition to the LaFrance, Knox, Peerless, Kelley and Seagrave machines. After careful consideration of plans and specifications and careful testing of the machines, it was decided that the Seagrave was best adapted to the use of our department and a contract was entered into with the Seagrave Company to furnish such a machine, with such changes and extra parts as were thought necessary by the committee, for the sum of Fifty-seven hundred and seventy-five dollars. The machine arrived in due time, was thoroughly tried out by the Fire department and found entirely satisfactory. At a meeting of the committee held January 25th, 1913, the apparatus was formally accepted for the town and the bill approved for payment.

Your committee is of the opinion that the apparatus is excellent in design and construction and should reduce the fire risk in our town, but would suggest that great care should be exercised in selecting as drivers men who are well fitted by proper temperament and mental qualities to give it proper care and to use extreme caution to avoid accidents in driving. A single effort to be spectacular before a crowd may cost more damage to the machine than a fire loss in value or cost through loss of life more than the entire value of the machine.

Your committee recommend that the town consider the matter of taking out insurance against accident.

Your committee recommend that the Fire Department be requested to keep an accurate account of all costs in operating this truck for guidance in future purchases. Such account should include cost of lubricating oils, cost of gasoline, time actually consumed in caring for the machine, time consumed in trial trips, alarms answered and time in answering, cost of all ordinary repairs, cost of all repairs due to accidents in running trial trips, cost for accidents met in answering alarms.

GEORGE R. BARNSTEAD,
EDGAR L. PATCH,
GEORGE A. HINCHCLIFFE,
LESTER D. HOLDEN,
LOUIS F. BRUCE,
CHARLES E. CLOUTMAN,
ALBERT J. SMITH
EARLE H. CHAPIN

Mr. Stillman Crouch became the first permanent fireman of the Stoneham Fire Department.

After many years of pleading by the Engineers, a pair of horses were purchased by the Town to pull the Hook & Ladder truck. These horses were kept in the Public Works barn on Tidd Street and used by the Public Works when not needed by the Department.

The 1913 Town Report showed that it cost \$69.85 to operate the motorized fire truck for thirteen months. Over the same period it would have cost \$85.00 to hire a team of horses to do the same job. So it would seem a savings was already evident.

A Universal fire alarm box was purchased and installed in the house occupied by Combination A. This made it possible for the permanent man on duty at the station, upon receipt of a reported fire, to ring in the alarm of the box nearest the fire, thus saving valuable time for call men who could respond directly to the fire.

On February 18th, a shoe factory owned and occupied by Healey Brothers, located on Raffety Rd., was destroyed by fire. The houses of Patrick Rafferty and Alfred T. Peacock on Rafferty Road, and Ernest Healy on Cedar Avenue were also set afire and damaged by flying embers.

June 25, 1914, Assistant Chief Joseph Tansey and ten men traveled twelve miles in the Combination A. to help fight the great Salem fire. A newspaper article dated June 27, 1914, tells the story.

Salem asked help of the Stoneham Fire Department to assist in checking the spread of the big fire which broke out in that city about 1:30 Thursday afternoon, causing a property loss of \$122,000,000 and burning over an area of more than two square miles. The out of town signal, 8-8, was sounded at 4:20 o'clock, and in a very short time the motor truck, with a full equipment of men, had started on the twelve mile run to the Witch City. The Stoneham firemen remained on duty until 3:30 A.M. on Friday.

Quoting from the Boston Globe

The Pumping Engine owned by the FORE RIVER SHIPBUILDING COMPANY rendered yeoman service at the Salem fire. They were stationed at Summit Avenue and Lafayette Street. The machine, on Tuesday morning, was at a fire at Manchester, New Hampshire and was homeward bound this afternoon, when Messrs. Houghton and Ordway, who were in charge of it, learned of the Salem conflagration. They were in Stoneham when they heard of the fire and reached Salem just twenty-three minutes later. Five large streams were run off this engine. A crew of men in charge of Assistant Fire Chief "Joe" Tansey carried two of the lines up through Laurel Street,

tackling the blaze coming from Holly Street. This Stoneham Company stopped the fire at Linden and Holly Streets.

To Editor of Independent

The following personal letter contains an item of very important information as it gives deserved credit to the Stoneham Fire Department — those who, under Engineer Joseph Tansey, participated in the Salem firefighting, with being instrumental in preventing the spread of the conflagration into South Salem. This fact should be made known and the part which our men took should be given full announcement.

The letter deserves full reproduction in the local press. In such a universal calamity the personal matters, rightfully and properly, become matters of public interest and they also serve to reveal the aftermath of the disaster. The suffering was very serious — the strain and resulting sickness — the uncomplaining heartaches of the great middle class whom any sympathy can read. Such a letter is worthwhile.

G. W. Bell
6 Linden Street
Salem, Mass.
June 27, 1914

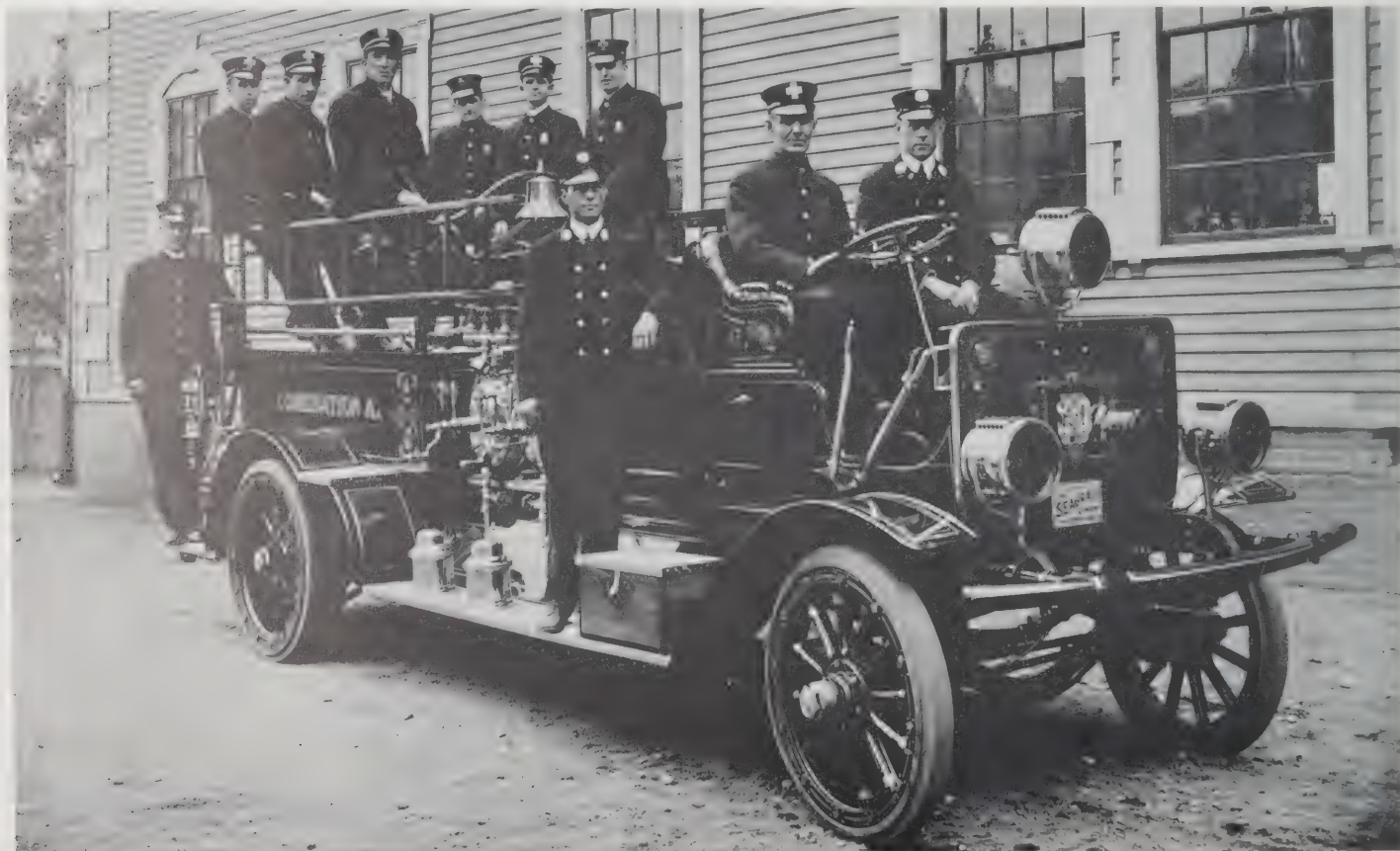
Dear Stoneham Friends:

It is very good at a time of such disaster to know of the sympathetic interest of others, and I appreciate your note very sincerely.

Linden Street is parallel to Lafayette Street on the West side and runs only two blocks. The fire swept up to our house on the back and within one on the North, burning everything for a mile, white in its fierceness, and then passed by and went on its destruction.

Our house is a three story French roofed affair, high and bulky, and when the roof caught under the slates it seemed to doom the whole of Linden Street and all of upper South Salem. The water pressure was too low to send the stream near the roof and things looked black for the neighborhood, when the fire company from STONEHAM under Engineer Tansey, with the motor truck engine and chemical arrived just in the nick of time. Rapidly they threw up ladders to the roof and stopped the fire in that direction.

We want the people of Stoneham to realize how much we appreciate this timely aid and we want to congratulate them on the efficient work accomplished by their fire company.



COMBINATION A WITH THE CREW THAT HELPED FIGHT THE GREAT SALEM FIRE

(Left to right) Harry Potter, Bill Plummer, Unknown, J. Finnegan, Unknown, Frank Flowers, Herb Plummer. On Running Board Charles Evans, Driver, Sam Barnsted, B. Brooks.

During the same year, E. R. Seaver Hose No. 3 disbanded and Hose House No. 3 was sold. The members were assigned to other companies. One reason given for this action was the difficulty in getting horses.

The Col. Gould Steamer had an extensive overhauling by the Combination Ladder Company.

In 1916, a building was constructed to house both the Fire and Police Departments. The site chosen was a section of land located on the corner of Central and Emerson Streets on the spot of the July 5, 1903 fire which destroyed six businesses. Maybe they should have named this building the Phoenix. Built at a cost of \$50,000 and planned to house both departments for fifty years, it has surpassed expectations. For fifty-nine years later, it is still the home of the Fire Department.

In 1919 Albert J. Smith, Chief Engineer, became the second permanent Fireman.

Stoneham purchased its second motorized fire truck, a 750 gallon per minute Pumper in 1921. The third member of the Department was appointed this year, Herbert Plummer.

Joseph Tansey was appointed to the permanent Department in 1922. On March 6th, General Worth Hose Company became Engine Company No. 1.

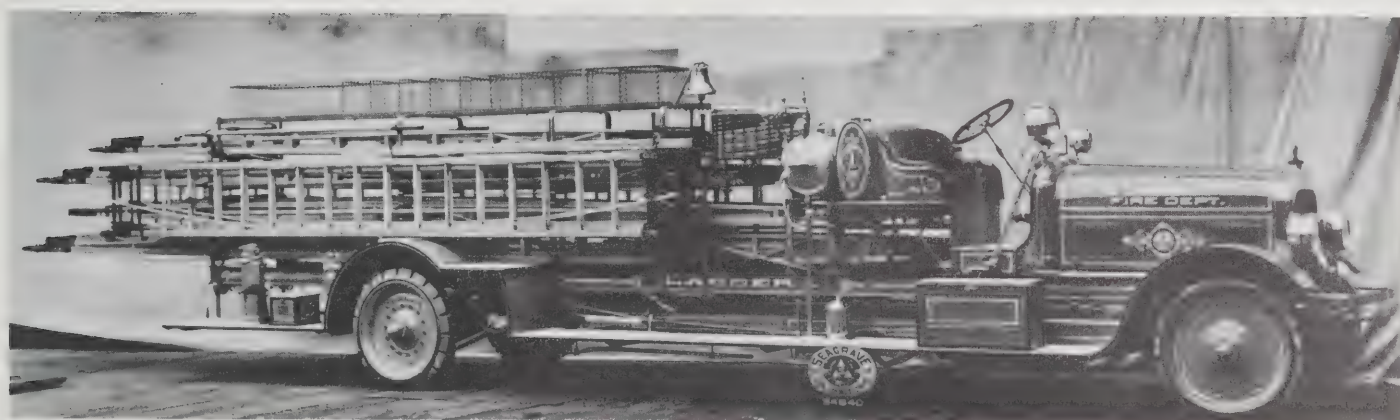
In 1923, Daniel W. Poore was appointed to the Department.

1923 saw the end of the horse-drawn fire apparatus in Stoneham with the purchase of a Seagrave City Service Ladder truck. This was more than just the end of the horse-drawn fire apparatus. It also was the beginning of the end for the familiar names these trucks carried. The Gen. Worth was the first to go, with the decision to call the new 1921 Seagrave Pump, Engine 1. Why this change was made, or by whom, is not clear. The reasons were, no doubt, very good, but we still regret that the decision ever had to be made. The new Ladder Truck was not the proud Resolute, but the cold, clear and simple Ladder 1.

In 1924 a Reo Motor Chassis was purchased and the body of the old horse-drawn combination mounted on it by members of the Department. It served as both brush fire and fire alarm maintenance truck. The Reo carried 35 gallon chemical tank, 600 feet of hose, 150 feet of chemical hose, 13 soda and acid extinguishers.

A siren was installed at the corner of Franklin and Central Streets in the Square to help clear traffic when apparatus was responding to alarms.

1925, the 200th Anniversary of Stoneham, saw



1923 Seagrave City Service – Stoneham's First Motorized Ladder Truck

the Fire Department organized as follows:

Engineers: Albert J. Smith
Louis F. Bruce
Fred L. Newhall

Permanent Firemen: Stillman Crouch
Albert T. Smith
Herbert E. Plummer
Joseph Tansey
Daniel E. Poore

During 1925 the first permanent fireman, Stillman Crouch, retired and William F. McCall was appointed to fill the vacancy.

The following is a list of the 1925 Call Men:

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1. William Plummer | 12. Bun Willett |
| 2. Henry Thorn | 13. Dick Ervin |
| 3. Fred Peterson | 14. John Finnegan |
| 4. Harry Potter | 15. Sam Hunt |
| 5. Charles Evans | 16. Ed Perry |
| 6. Charles Brewer | 17. Fred Wilkens |
| 7. Shorty Newhall | 18. Ed Frazier |
| 8. James Lamb | 19. J. Comeau |
| 9. Fred Sweet | 20. F. Parks |
| 10. Frank Flowers | 21. J. McPartland |
| 11. M. T. Witcher | 22. Ray Stone |

APPARATUS

1912 Seagrave Combination A
1921 Seagrave 750 gallon P. M. Pumper
1923 Seagrave City Service Ladder Truck
1924 Reo Motor Chassis Combination Chemical & Hose Wagon

All of the above apparatus was housed at the Fire Station on Central Street. There were 95 bell alarms and 65 still alarms. During the year, all fire hose couplings were recut over to National Standard thread to comply with the State law. This made the interchanging of hose at fires, where out of town fire apparatus was needed, much simpler. Until this time each town might have different threads on their hydrants, hose couplings and truck connections. This made the use of out of town hose impossible unless adapters were available and even then, it was a time consuming business.

In 1926 thirteen members of the Stoneham Department, who had responded to the great Salem Fire of 1914, attended Salem's 300th anniversary as guests of that City.

In 1927 the personnel of the Department went to the two platoon system. Until this time a firefighter was required to work one 24 hour shift every other day, or 96 hours a week.

The two platoon system divided each 24 hour

period into a ten hour day and a 14 hour night. This gave each man a chance to be home at least some part of each day. The new system reduced the firefighter work week to 84 hours and required the appointing of two additional men, Richard Ervin and Henry Thorn, bringing the total strength of the permanent Department to seven.

Chief Albert J. Smith retired in December of this year and William F. McCall was appointed Chief. William Plummer was appointed to fill the vacancy.

With the appointment of William Plummer there began a tradition that has continued throughout our history. Whether it be brothers, as were Bill and Herb Plummer, or a son working with his father and carrying on after the father has retired, it is the tradition of family members serving together on the Stoneham Fire Department.

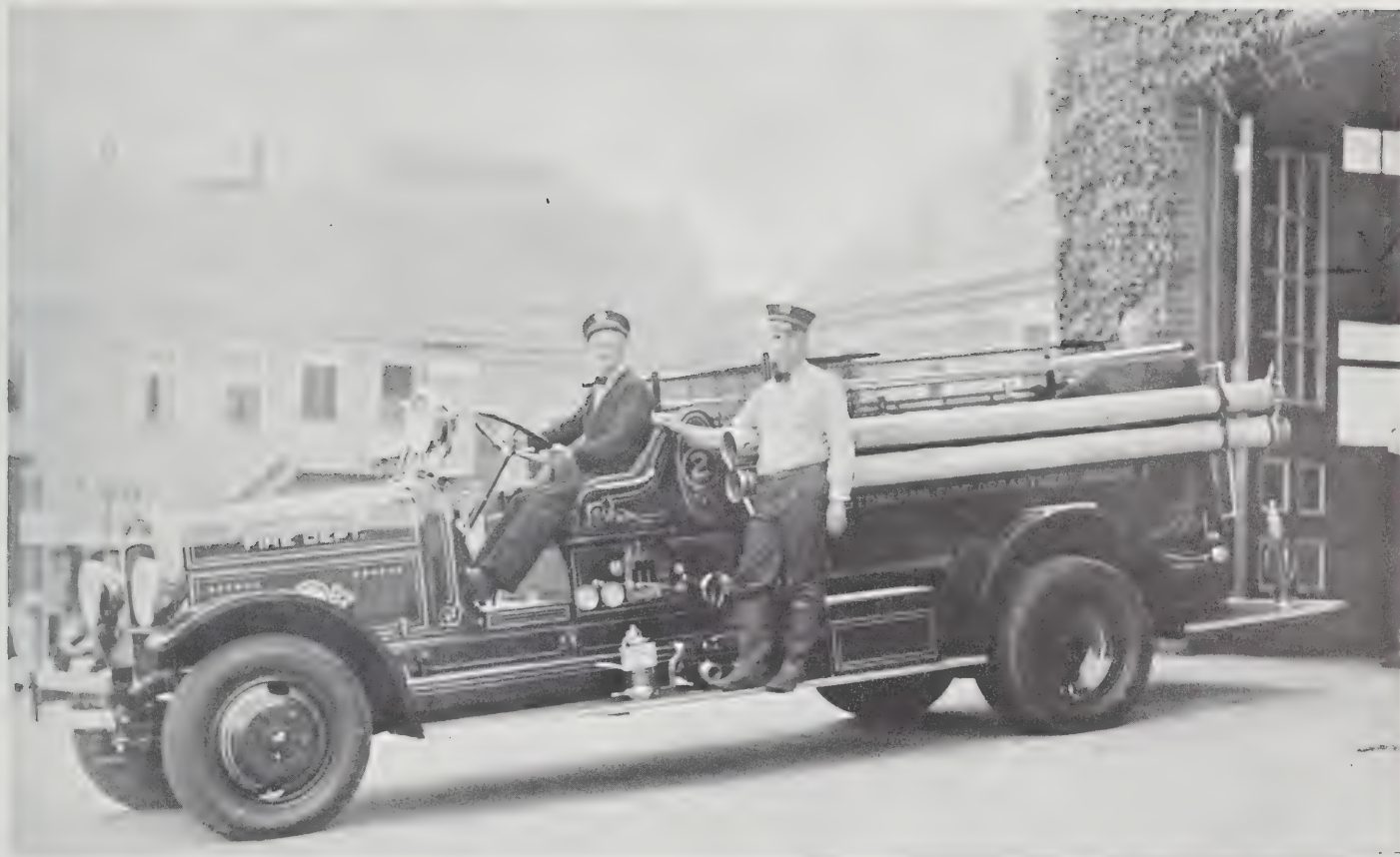
The Col. Gould Steamer, after serving the Town for thirty-six years, was sold to a Boston contractor to be used to pump out flooded cellars on the water front. With this sale went the last of the old name fire trucks. It seems almost as cruel a fate as sending a faithful old horse to the glue factory.

The late 1920's and early 30's were lean years for America, and this was reflected in the Stoneham Fire Department. By necessity, appropriations were small for all Town Departments during this period. For this reason the Fire Department must have considered itself fortunate to be able to purchase a new Seagrave 600 gallon per minute fire truck in 1931. This truck had a 60 gallon tank, thus making it possible to have water on a fire without first connecting to a hydrant. While this water supply was small, it sometimes would mean the difference in making a quick stop of a dangerous fire.

Even with the economic pinch the Department was able to modernize in some small but significant way. The water damage caused while fighting fires was recognized, and efforts were made to minimize this problem with the purchase and use of two salvage covers. The first CO² type fire extinguisher called fire freeze was purchased during this period to be used primarily on automobile fires.

A new lighting plant was purchased to assist firefighters in night fires. The Department made the first purchase of 1½ inch hose (cotton). For many years the 1½ inch hose was used exclusively for brush fires and thought to be of little or no use on house fires.

In 1926 a second hand Ford truck was acquired for use as a fire alarm truck. The first Chief's car was purchased in 1928. In 1932 the members of the De-



Engine 2 – 1931 – Seagrave – Joseph Tansey at the Wheel and on the Running Board Bill Plummer

partment began overhauling a 1927 Dodge Coupe for use as a fire alarm truck. Finally, in 1935, enough money was available to purchase a brand new Ford fire alarm truck. A new Deluge Gun was also purchased to replace the obsolete Eastman Deluge Set which had been in service since 1911.

Not until 1936 was the Town of Stoneham able to spend any significant amount on updating the fire protection in Stoneham. This year the Fire Alarm System was completely rebuilt and all old obsolete equipment was replaced. The Gardner fire alarm boxes were replaced by the new Peerless bell door boxes.

William E. Crosby was appointed to fill a vacancy on the Department caused by the untimely death of Captain Daniel W. Poore in 1937.

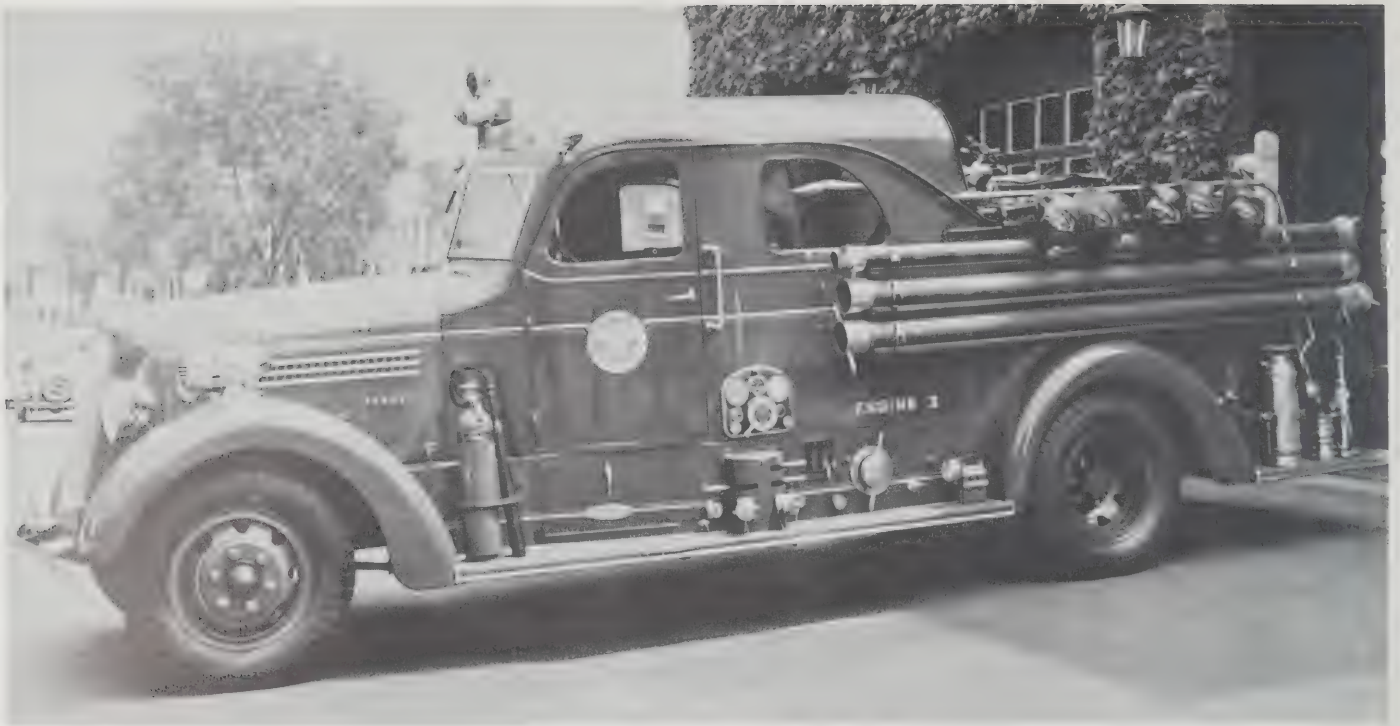
Red oscillating lights were installed on all apparatus. A new Buick coupe was purchased to replace the 1928 Buick Chief's car. A mutual aid hookup was completed with Wakefield.

The Hurricanes of 1938 raised havoc with the new fire alarm system. Storm-felled trees and branches cut both telephone and fire alarm wires in many locations. This left large areas of Stoneham with no

way to report a fire. It required several days of around the clock work by the fire alarm crew to put the system back on a temporary footing, and several months to complete all necessary repairs. With all the problems of 1938, time and money were found to install new overhead doors at the Fire Station.

In 1940 the Town purchased a Seagrave 750 G.P.M. Canopy Pumper designated as Engine 3. This truck replaced the 1921 Engine 1 which was put in reserve.

Until now all apparatus purchased by the Stoneham Department had open cabs, giving the driver no protection from the elements. These open cabs were considered to give the driver and officer a better view while responding to a fire. While this may have been of some advantage in the city with large buildings, it was a very limited asset in a small residential community such as Stoneham. With the longer runs common to residential areas where exposure to rain, snow, sleet and cold lasted for much longer periods than in the city, it was finally decided, at least in Stoneham, that open cabs were more of a liability than an asset. Stoneham Engine 3 became Stoneham's first piece of fire apparatus with an enclosed cab. From this point on, all future fire trucks were purchased with enclosed cabs.



Stoneham Engine 3 – 1940 – Seagrave 750 G.P.M. Pumper – The First Fire Truck Purchased With Enclosed Cab



FEBRUARY 14, 1940

With Its Roof Cleaned Off by Fire, and the Entire Top Floor Guttred, the Bell Block, Former Home of the Town Offices on the Second Floor, and the Top Floor, Housing the Knights of Columbus, Were Completely Wrecked. Some Evidence of the Marvelous Piece of Fire Fighting by the Local Department and Seven Assisting Pumps from Neighboring Towns May Be Seen by the Proximity to Other Buildings.

Bell Building Blaze At Height Of Blizzard Wednesday Night Requires Aid From Eight Towns; Great Save

Only the valiant efforts of Stoneham's high grade fire department, together with the combined aid of eight other cities and towns who sent assistance, prevented a sweep of the southwest portion of the town's business section late Wednesday night when fire broke out in the Bell block during the height of the northeast blizzard which whipped up a wind velocity of between 50 and 60 miles per hour.

The blaze, which presented one of the most spectacular fires the town has ever witnessed, was fought by firemen from Stoneham, Wakefield, Melrose, Reading, Woburn, Winchester, Medford and Malden. Fire Chief William F. McCall ordered a general alarm a few minutes after his arrival at the scene.

The local department fought successfully against seemingly impossible odds while trying to hold the raging fire from spreading until help from outside communities arrived. For a while, it appeared as though help might not arrive due to the storm which made the roads practically impassable but one by one apparatus arrived to take up their assignments.

Damage has been estimated at \$50,000, the upper floor of the building of which the Knights of Columbus has occupied for so many years, bearing the brunt of the flames. The second floor, which was formerly occupied by the town offices, and was vacant except for the law office of H. H. Richardson, was badly damaged by fire and water. Heavy water damage was also caused to the Bell Hardware store, the owner of which, G. Ernest Bell, is also proprietor; Fred McLaughlin's store and the barber shop operated by Leo Fama.

Although smoke had been smelled as early as 9.30 by several people, no trace could be made as to its origin. The swirling snow on the three and one-half story wooden structure camouflaged the smoke in its early inception.

Shortly before 11.30, proprietor Furio Bracciotti of the Stoneham Pharmacy, who had smelled smoke in his store a large part of the evening, decided to call Chief McCall. At the same time, Patrolman John Judge waded through drifts in the rear of the building where he found that the building was on fire.

In the meantime, Chief McCall took one look at the structure and yelled to a young man, Donald Lilly, to sound an alarm from box 63. Chief McCall got as far as the top of the stairs leading to the second floor where he found the upper interior a mass of flames.

He then ordered Supt. of Fire Alarm William Crosby to sound a second alarm which brought pumping engines from Wakefield and Melrose into action automatically.

Flames broke through the roof and flattened out toward the Dorr building. Local firemen had got three lines working right away, one up the stairs leading to the second floor and

the other two on the Dorr building.

Chief McCall quickly sized up the possibility of a conflagration and ordered Capt. Harry Crosby of Engine 1 to telephone for assistance from Reading, Woburn, Winchester, Medford and Malden. Reading sent two engines, the other departments one each and within a few minutes there were 11 pieces of apparatus assembled at the fire.

Malden and Medford, answering their first call from the Stoneham department, fought their way to the scene by a circuitous route. Malden firemen estimated they traveled close to 20 miles in order to get to the fire, a round-about way through Winchester being the only passable road. Actually Malden and Medford departments were stopped near Hancock street by stalled autos and a derailed street car snow plough. But the two engines were pressed into service at hydrants.

Although only a few yards from the Bell block, the Stoneham apparatus had a difficult time getting thru radiator-high drifts in Central Sq. Scores of automobiles were half-buried in the drifts.

Engine 1 succeeded in breaking through and drew up opposite the burning building. Engine 2 got nearly to the corner of Main and Franklin streets while Ladder 1 was forced to stop at the entrance to Central street. Hose lines were dragged over the snow to hydrants and ladders were hauled by hand across the square.

The strategic placement of the first two lines on the Dorr building undoubtedly saved that wooden structure. Firemen got out on the flat roof of the building and absorbed terrific punishment while pouring streams of water into K. of C. hall which had become a raging inferno.

Reading set up a pump at Main and Hersam streets; Wakefield firemen under Capt. Clifford Jacobs took the hydrant in front of Grant's store while Melrose and Malden pumped from hydrants near Maple and Warren streets. Chief Hugh Eames of Reading had his second piece of apparatus at the fire assigned to fire headquarters here in the event of another fire.

The new Woburn pump set up at Maple and Wright sts., Medford attached to the hydrant in front of Treacy's Bakery, just below the Library, Malden and Winchester pumps worked in conjunction from the corner of Hancock and Main sts., laying their lines by hand.

The Wakefield pump worked from the hydrant in front of Grant's store in the square, while Melrose worked from the junction of Warren and Maple sts.

An excited person did sound an alarm from box 65 at Main and Hancock streets at 12.15, some three-quarters of an hour after the first alarm had gone in.

Fire brands flew through the air as the fire raged and several landed in the vicinity of Hancock and Lincoln streets. Only for snow on the

roofs—and plenty of it—prevented other fires from breaking out.

As it was, sparks ignited the old LeDuc block and a lively fire sprang up. A section was burned out and damage done to the stores of Fred LeDuc, fish dealer, and Mike Baduvakis, shoe repairman.

The fire attracted hundreds who ventured out to brave the blizzard. Many women were numbered among the onlookers. The sounding of the second alarm awoke many people while a Colonial Network News Service special radio bulletin announced a short time after the fire broke out, informed others.

Day officers of the police department were called back to duty to augment the night force who were trying to straighten out a hopeless traffic jam. The derailed plow forced whatever moving traffic there was to a complete standstill.

No injuries were received at the fire although many of the firemen were exhausted.

With the drain on the water supply, the pressure went down. The Green street standpipe gate was opened by Superintendent of Water Morrison Merrill of Wakefield while Metropolitan water officials opened the South street gate. Every ounce of pressure that could be given the town was done, Metropolitan officials said.

Restaurants remained open all night to serve frozen firemen and spectators with food and coffee. Harry Brown, whose home is located at the rear of the burning building, also served coffee to the firemen as they watched his house carefully because of its proximity to the fire.

Damage to individual properties varied between fire, smoke and water. A brief summary of estimated damage is as follows:

Hanks Bakery, slight smoke damage, some water, loss of fires by water.

Fred's Store, all water and smoke damage, nearly 100% loss.

Leo the Barber, practically total loss from water and smoke.

Mrs. Hanks, apartment over bakery, water damage to furniture.

Stoneham Pharmacy, water and smoke damage to some extent.

Schaefer's, no damage.

Ide's Fashion Shop, smoke and water damage.

Stoneham Fruit Co., slight water damage.

John Baduvakis, slight water damage.

LeDuc Block, now owned by Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., slight fire and water damage in rear.

Bell Building, top floor total loss; fire; second floor, practically loss by fire and water; first much water damage.

H. H. Richardson, some damage.

Knights of Columbus, total fire.

Dorr Block, some water dan

39 Fires Set Just for Fun

A STAFF REPORT

ONCE again the value of observation by Fire Chiefs, or members of Fire Departments, at the scene of an incendiary fire, has proven its worth. In recent years, Fire Department officials and arson investigators have

proximate loss of \$200,000. The gang not only confessed to setting the long series of fires, but also admitted that they had planned more acts of arson merely for the thrill of watching the fires, and in many cases, aiding the

A total of thirty-nine fires have been charged to this gang. The fires occurred in Stoneham, Woburn, Wakefield, Reading, Malden and Melrose. Within exactly fifteen days from the time that Chief McCall made his observation, the seven suspects were arrested, indicted, convicted and sentenced. The mob pleaded guilty to twenty-one indictments.



← This is the Fingerprint, With the Tell-Tale Scar, Found on the Lock

Fire Department in putting them out.

These thrill-seekers illustrate how a gang of young men, banded together through sheer deviltry, went from bad to worse until their acts, starting in mere fun, terminated in a commission of felony crimes and landed them in jail for long periods. First they set grass fires, then forest fires, and later burned abandoned shacks, graduating eventually to barns, and finally to very destructive

fires in large buildings.

Not only did their fires increase in seriousness, but on the night of February 14, 1940, St. Valentine's day, during the worst blizzard that has hit New England in many years, they touched off the largest building on Main Street, Stoneham, with a loss of \$40,000. This fire came close to being a general conflagration. Because of weather conditions, outside help which was called from many communities, was delayed in reaching this fire. Apparatus from adjoining communities had to be preceded by highway ploughs to break through the drifts which blocked the highways.

These perilous journeys, and the fight with the elements, would in themselves make an interesting story, but, briefly, the Chiefs from the adjoining towns state that never in their many years of fire service have they experienced the difficulties encountered on that night. Just as the Stoneham Fire Department feared that the fire was going to sweep Main Street, and probably many dwellings, the outside help broke through the barriers of snow and the fire was checked in the nick of time.

It was for this St. Valentine's night fire that the young man who had sounded an alarm was first observed by Chief McCall, and later when observed at the second fire, the Chief's suspicions were aroused.

agreed that the Fire Chief and his men first at the scenes of fires are in a position to observe conditions that would be of great value in the ultimate solution of a case, if it should be one of incendiarism.

This was vividly borne out recently when Chief William McCall, of Stoneham, Mass., noticed that a young man, who had previously sounded an alarm for a fire which was known to have been set, was

standing at the fire alarm box to direct the apparatus to the scene of the present fire which was found to be of incendiary origin. Promptly, he notified the State Fire Marshal's office, which had been investigating a series of incendiary fires extending over a period of a year.

Chief McCall's quick action resulted in the arrest and subsequent conviction of seven persons, ranging in ages from seventeen to twenty-three years, and the solving of thirty-nine fires which had caused an ap-

Good Investigation Work

In addition to the keen observation of Fire Chief McCall, there was some splendid work accomplished by the investigators, such as the discovery of a fingerprint on a lock which had been broken from the door of a closet under a stairway where a fire was set. This print disclosed a scar on the finger that left the print. The first suspect to be picked up was found to have this scar, and the print from his own finger corresponded with the print on the lock. The car used by the firebugs was traced by a plaster cast of a tire mark found at the scene

of a fire, while gasoline used in spreading the flames was found to be, by laboratory tests, a certain type, identified by specifications, as a certain brand, and inquiry at all places where such a brand of gasoline was sold disclosed that the gang had bought similar gasoline. Footprints left by the suspects also identified by plaster cast as similar to shoes worn by the suspect.

Another feature of the operations of this gang was that they held meetings to plan their crimes, various members being assigned to spot the buildings to be burned, another to force an entrance, another to carry the inflammables, another to touch off the fire, and still another to sound the alarm, so that all could join in assisting the Fire Department.

While all these fires were "just for fun," the gang now will have ample time to think over their foolishness while serving the jail terms previously listed.



1944 Seagrave 65 Foot Aerial Ladder Truck

1941-42-43, the war years, were upon us and while the Department was able to add two new permanent men in 1942, William McCall and John Graham, the volunteer or call department was hard hit by the need for men in the military. An auxiliary fire unit was organized, made up of about fifty older men and young boys to help fill in the void. This auxiliary worked well over the next several years and received some well deserved praise.

A Seagrave 65 foot aerial ladder truck was purchased in 1944. Just getting this truck, with the war effort still in full swing, must have been a tremendous undertaking. There was no chrome available and it was necessary to paint everything red – siren, hand-rails and trim.

In 1945 a Dodge 200 G.P.M. Pumper with a 200 gallon booster tank was the Reo's replacement. This truck was provided with two booster reels which allowed the firefighters to cover a much larger area with hose streams and were invaluable when fighting brush fires over large areas.

While this may seem of little significance to the reader, it was a major improvement to call firefighters who fought these brush fires. Until this time these men had but thirteen soda and acid extinguishers at their disposal at a brush fire. If the fire was not extinguished by the time these extinguishers were emptied, another truck would have to be dispatched to the fire and 2½ inch hose laid into the woods, in some cases hundreds of feet. In the meantime, other call men at the station were put to work refilling the extinguishers. After several days of this procedure, the pants of the men began to look as if they had been

hit by a shot gun blast because of the corrosive effects of the sulfuric acid spilled on them.

The old handmade Reo brush fire truck and city service ladder truck were sold. The hose body off the Reo was part of the 1904 Combination chemical and hose wagon. This means that the Combination chemical and hose body itself was in service for 41 years. The original cost was \$1,035. It would seem we received our money's worth from this purchase.



1945 Dodge Brush Fire Truck Engine 4

In 1946 the annual Town Meeting reduced the work hours of the Stoneham firefighters from 84 hours a week to 72 hours. To implement this new schedule, Louis J. Longo and James J. McDermott were added to the permanent force. Deputy Chief Joseph Tansey retired after 49 years of service, both call and permanent, and his place was filled by Charles Whitcher. The fire alarm system was extended to the New England Sanatorium. A new Nash Chief's car was also purchased this year.

In 1947 Captain Richard Ervin and Lieutenant William E. Crosby were appointed Deputy Chief Engineers, and after 32 years, the first major repairs were made to the fire station, with the installation of a new roof.

In 1948 Louis Longo was forced to retire due to an injury received while fighting a house fire on Central Street. Lou's right wrist was so badly cut that he lost most of the use of his hand.

In September, Chief William F. McCall retired and William E. Crosby was appointed as the new Chief. Henry J. Crosby and William Vayo became members of the Department.

An event occurred this year which had a profound effect on the Stoneham Fire Department. A tragic fire on the morning of September 27th took the lives of three children of the O'Connell family on Chestnut Street. This fire and its aftermath was responsible for the addition of six permanent firefighters in 1949. For years prior to this tragic fire, Chief McCall had asked for additional manpower. He had explained that while the population of Stoneham had increased dramatically, the membership of the Department had stood still.

The investigation after the fire brought out very clearly that while a call force can be of assistance to a Fire Department, they never can replace a permanent fire fighting force ready for instant response.

A mutual aid hookup was completed with the Town of Reading.

In 1949 the Department jumped from 10 to 16 permanent members with the appointment of George Whitcher, Val Matogno, Robert Marshall, Russell Holden, Raymond Sorensen, and Francis (Buddy) Wells.

As the 50's arrived, much of the romance and glamour had faded from the Fire Department, but also gone was the loss of time waiting for volunteers to reach the engine house. Gone too was the well-intended, but sometimes unnecessary, damage done at fires by these untrained volunteers. The 50's also saw an increase in fire prevention work as the hospital and ten nursing homes and nineteen schools all required quarterly inspections.

Further progress in Stoneham fire protection was made with the installation of a two way radio in the Chief's car, and a remote control unit in the fire station to operate in conjunction with the Police Department. This equipment allowed the Chief to be in constant communication with the fire station and enabled him to order additional alarms to be sounded or equipment to be dispatched to a fire without the

delay of calling on a phone, or re-routing his request through a police cruiser at the fire, to the police station and finally, to the fire station. From this time on, all new trucks were equipped with two way radios.

In 1950 William Meegan was promoted from the call force to the permanent department to fill the vacancy caused by the retirement of Deputy Chief Richard Ervin, after forty years of service.

The members of the Department formed the Stoneham Fire Fighters Association.

Over the next several years, Chief Crosby asked that some serious consideration be given to construction of a sub-station in the northern part of Town. This idea apparently went the way of a request for a hose wagon for the south end of Town years earlier, and died a quiet death.

In 1952 six new firefighters joined the Department: James (Red) Bowman, Albert Duff, George Grafton, William Hannaford, Clarence Malonson and John Marshall. Captain Herbert Plummer retired after 42 years of call and permanent service. With the upgrading of the Fire Department of both men and equipment, and with improvements made in the water system, Stoneham went from a Class C to Class B rated community for fire insurance purposes.

The Town purchased a Seagrave 750 G.P.M. Pumper with a 200 gallon booster tank and an Auxiliary Pump able to produce a high pressure fog stream, designated as Engine 1.



1952 Seagrave 750 G.P.M. Pumper. Lt. Charles Beckwith in Cab.

In 1953 the hours of the Department were reduced from 72 a week to 56, and five new firefighters were appointed to implement the new schedule: Fred Abbott, Charles Beckwith, George Downes, John Hubbard and Warren Newcomb.

A new Chrysler Chief's car was purchased to replace the old Nash.

Members of the Department responded to a call for help from Worcester, Massachusetts. This City

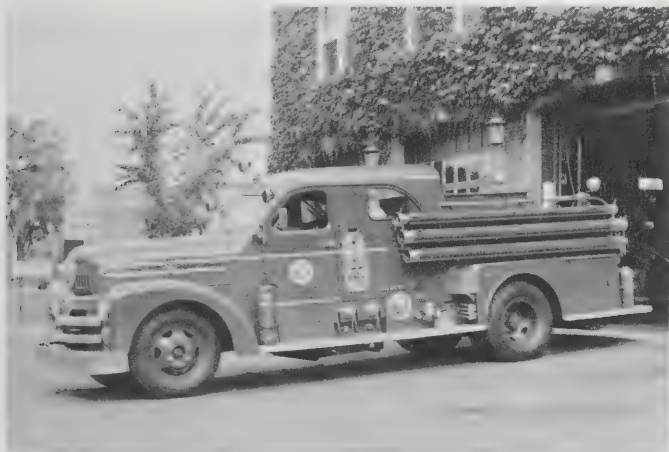
and the surrounding area was devastated by a tornado. For four nights members of the Department volunteered to form a fire watch over the ravaged buildings. Each night Stoneham firefighters joined a convoy of trucks from surrounding communities to make the trip to Worcester, returning the next morning.

In 1954 Lieutenant Walter McDonald resigned from the Department and his place was filled by John Judge. A fire alarm truck with an extension ladder mounted on the body for easier access to fire alarm wires, was purchased.

Again the fire alarm system was hard hit by two hurricanes. Over the last several years a portion of the fire alarm system had been run underground instead of on the telephone poles. This reduced to some extent the damage from the storms.

In 1955 the Department was put under Civil Service. This meant that all future applicants for appointment or promotion, with the exception of the Chief, would be required to take a competitive examination.

In 1956 a Seagrave 750 G.P.M. pumper with a 200 gallon booster tank and auxiliary pump for high pressure fog was purchased. This truck designated Engine 5 was almost a twin to Engine 1.



1956 Engine 5 Seagrave 750 G.P.M. Pumper

William Vayo was appointed a permanent member of the Department in 1957 for the second time.

The fall of 1957 was a busy time for the Stoneham Department and came very close to being a tragic time. On September 12th at 4:00 P.M. an alarm was sounded for a fire in the Redmen's Hall on Winter Street. Before the fire was brought under control, a second alarm was sounded and help responded from Reading, Wakefield, Melrose and Winchester. Less than one month later, on October 6th at 10:29 P.M., Box 44 was sounded for a fire in Fredrick's Drug Store on Main Street. This fire, located in the

basement, produced considerable amounts of carbon monoxide gas which took a staggering toll of the members of the Department: Chief Crosby, Captain J. Graham, Robert Marshall, John Hubbard, George Witcher, Fred Abbott and James McDermott were overcome by the deadly fumes. All were removed to the hospital where they remained for several days. Chief Callahan of the Winchester Fire Department also was overcome and removed to Winchester Hospital. Chief Crosby was taken unconscious from the water in the basement of the store. This one fire effectively cut the strength of the Fire Department by one-fourth.

On October 14th, just eight days after the Fredrick's Drugstore fire and several days over a month after the Redmen blaze and before the stricken firefighters had returned to duty, the Department was faced with another General Alarm. At 3:49 P.M., Box 44 was sounded again. This time, for a fire in the Superior Electric Company on Main Street. These three buildings were located within 500 yards of each other and all were within 1000 yards of the fire station.

In 1958 the Department installed their own base station, equipped all fire vehicles with two-way radios and added four portable radios. This communication set up gives a high degree of efficiency at a fire especially a multiple alarm or apartment house fire. The hand-held portable radios allow the Chief to be in instant communication with the Captain, Lieutenant, all apparatus, the fire station and the equipment and stations of Wakefield, Melrose, Reading and the Stoneham Police.

In 1959, because of the increased size of the new fire apparatus, the doors to the fire station were widened. A new Chrysler Chief's car was purchased by the Town.

In 1960 the membership of the Department was increased to 29 permanent firefighters with the appointment of Phillip Carroll, George Emery, James McDermott, Jr. and Earl Potter.

In the 60's there were many apartment house complexes built which added another 1100 families to be protected. These large buildings presented a challenge to the Department. Chief Raymond Sorensen had by-laws passed at the Town Meeting that required sprinklers, standpipes and other fire safety features. This was a first in Massachusetts and other communities were quick to copy.

Hours of the Stoneham Department were reduced from 56 hours per week to 50.4.

An unusually wet spring of 1962 caused exten-

sive flooding of the homes in the south end of Town. The Fire Department, along with other Town Departments, spent a wet and cold three or four days in an around the clock effort to relieve the hardpressed residents.

A Dodge 200 G.P.M. Pumper with a 300 gallon booster tank was purchased to replace the 1945 brush truck Engine 4.

On November 11, 1962 it was decided to dis-



Engine 4 – 1962 Dodge 200 G.P.M. Pumper. Bill Kullman, Driver.

continue sounding the whistle on first alarms. The reasons given were the traffic problems created by people responding to alarms and because the call force had decreased to only two men.

In 1963 Henry D'Entremont was appointed to fill an opening on the Department created by the retirement of Captain Henry Crosby.



1969 Pirsch 85 Foot Aerial Ladder Truck, Jim Halpin, Driver

William Hannaford retired in 1965 and his place was taken by Henry Sutermeister. The appointment of Henry Sutermeister brought to an end the call firefighters of Stoneham.

Valentine Matogno, fire mechanic, retired in 1966.

In 1967 William E. Crosby, Chief of the Department for the past nineteen years, retired. Captain Raymond L. Sorensen is appointed Chief. Fred Abbott and George Whitcher also retire. Seven additional firefighters were appointed which increased the shift strength from nine to eleven men. For the first time there was a three man ladder crew. The new men were William Abbott, Paul Bears, Charles Fitzgerald, William McLaughlin, Robert O'Melia, Stanton Waite and Kevin Wynne.

This year also saw the old 1901 air whistle plant replaced with new Gamewell tanks and electric horn.

In 1968 while returning from a fire call, the crew of Engine 1 spotted smoke issuing from the Central Elementary School. Upon investigation, a fire was discovered, which could have caused tremendous damage to this old building had it not been discovered so quickly. For their alertness, Lieutenant Charles Beckwith, Russ Holden, John Judge and Jim Bowman received commendations from the Town of Stoneham.

Charles Antinoro was appointed to the Dept.

In 1968, Engines 1 and 5 were re-piped to give

them the modern feature of 1½ pre-connected lines. This was a significant change in the fire attack of the Stoneham Fire Department.

Mutual aid agreements were also radically changed. Contracts were drawn up with Winchester, Reading, Wakefield, and later, Melrose. There is automatic response when Stoneham has two boxes at the same time and also special response of ladder trucks to schools, churches and apartment houses.

A Pirsch ladder truck, equipped with 85 feet of aerial, was purchased in 1969. This purchase ended almost sixty years of total reliance on the Seagrave Company for all major apparatus since the first motorized fire truck combination A.

The Department expanded to 37 men with the appointment of William Dockery, Francis Gould, Francis Hudson, William Kelley and James Regan.

For the first time a boat was added to the Department in 1970. This is a fiber glass boat with steel runners which is primarily used for ice rescues.

A new Ford fire alarm truck was purchased with an aerial bucket.

Robert Kirby and Edward Manuel were appointed to the Department. Captain John Graham, Lieutenant Charles Whitcher and Lieutenant Charles Beckwith and Firefighter William Vayo retired.

This period shows a dramatic increase in the number of fire alarms from an average of 300 runs a year in the 40's to 600 in the 50's; 1000 in the 60's and 1501 in 1974.

Fire training was increased tenfold in the 60's and 70's and now the Department has many visual aid training films designed just for Stoneham. There are also several comprehensive training courses that have been created for the use of the Stoneham firefighter and these are used during the year.

In-service inspections, started in almost 300 business establishments, are inspected by an engine company that is instantly available if needed.

Very tragically three Stoneham residents lost their lives by fire during the year of 1971. One of these fires was extinguished with less than ten gallons of water and yet, the toxic fumes generated by a blanket and mattress, were enough to cause death.

It was while attempting to rescue one of these fire victims that firefighter George Grafton suffered smoke inhalation which caused his forced retirement.

It has become increasingly apparent that the poisonous and toxic fumes given off by the burning of modern fabrics, building materials and plastics are as dangerous and in many cases more dangerous than

the fire itself, and that the Scott Air pac used by the firefighter is as important as his hose line and water supply.

Bill Crosby and John Fullerton were appointed to the Department.

Also in 1971, 3½ inch hose was introduced in the Department and is used as a feeder line for Engine 2. This large diameter hose gives an excellent fire flow with little friction loss.

The traditional blue chambrey shirt and dungarees were replaced with a navy blue work uniform with a shoulder patch.

In February of 1972 the members of the Stoneham Fire Department voted to join the International Association of Firefighters AFL-CIO and became Local 2116.

1972 – The Stoneham Department is called to Wakefield on numerous occasions for a rash of major fires that caused damage in the millions.

Both Captain John Judge and Francis Wells were forced to retire due to heart conditions. Leon Curley and Charles Greenleaf were appointed to fill the vacancies.

A 1972 Chrysler Chief's car was purchased because of the added fire prevention work done by the Department. The old Chief's car was retained and used for inspections by the officers.

In 1973 a new Pirsch 1000 gallon attack Pumper was delivered to the Department. Engine 2 has a 500 gallon water tank and a pre-connected deluge gun of 300-750 GPM. It also has a 2½ inch pre-connect and four 1½ inch pre-connects. A 250 GPM foam eductor and a 200 lb. dry chemical extinguisher. It is the purpose of this engine to go directly to the fire without stopping at a hydrant, and make an immediate attack on the fire. The 85 foot aerial ladder pulls up directly in front of the building. Engine 5 then lays a 3½ inch feeder line to Engine 2. This whole operation allows Engine 2 to put a tremendous amount of water on the fire without delay.

The drivers of Engines 1 and 4 will remain at the station and monitor the radio calls from the fire scene, take any additional telephone calls, relay any new information received about the fire, give Engine 5 the hydrant location nearest the fire, and respond to or dispatch mutual aid apparatus to simultaneous fire calls or to strike a second alarm if ordered to by the officer at the fire scene.

After extensive tests were conducted as to the structural strength of the apparatus floor, it was determined that it should be reinforced. It is to the



1972 Pirsch Attack Pumper – Chief of Department, Raymond Sorenson.

credit of both designers and builders of the fire station which was constructed in 1916, primarily for horse-drawn apparatus, that so few alterations and improvements have been necessary over the years.

In 1973 Earl Potter, John Hubbard and John Marshall retired. James Halpin, George Sowyrda, Jr., Sam Earle, Jr., William Kullman and Richard LeBlanc were appointed to the Department.

In 1974 Captain William McCall retired and David Bettencourt, Francis Brown, Paul Burditt and Robert Dunphy were appointed to the Department.

In September 1974, the primary telephone emergency number was replaced with 438-1313, a much easier number to remember. Also, the first woman employee, Mrs. Judith Cronin, was hired as secretary. She will replace Lieutenant William Meegan on July 1, 1975. Lieutenant Meegan was Clerk for over twenty years.

In 1975 the Department's hours were reduced from 50.4 per week to 42 hours. After quite a discussion at the Town Meeting, eight additional firefighters were approved.

Because of Court Rulings favoring minorities, Civil Service was required to revise their testing procedures. As a result, the eight firefighters appointed are only temporary pending a July examination. The temporary firefighters are Bernard Arsenault, Mike Murphy, Richard Marengi, Walter Johnson, Douglas Griffin, John Scullin, Paul Courtenay and William Carr.

As of July of 1975 the Stoneham Fire Department is organized as follows:

Raymond Sorensen, Chief

The members of the Department are organized into four groups:

Group 1

Capt. J. McDermott
Lt. George Downes
Pvts. J. Bowman
S. Waite
W. Kelley
W. Bockery
C. Greenleaf
G. Sowyrda
R. LeBlanc
B. Arsenault
M. Murphy

Group 2

Capt. W. Abbott
Lt. C. Fitzgerald
Pvts. R. Marshall
H. D'Entremont
C. Malonson
P. Bears
J. Reagan
F. Hudson
D. Bettencourt
P. Burditt
R. Marengi
W. Johnson

Group 3

Capt. F. Gould
Lt. W. Meegan
Pvts. R. Holden
E. Manuel
R. Kirby
W. Crosby
J. Fullerton
L. Curley
S. Earl
R. Dunphy
D. Griffin
J. Scullin

Group 4

Capt. G. Emery
Lt. W. McLaughlin
Pvts. W. Newcomb
R. O'Melia
K. Wynne
C. Antinoro
J. Halpin
W. Kullman
F. Brown
P. Courtenay
W. Carr

Apparatus Consists Of:

1973 Pirsch 1000 GPM Engine 2
1970 Pirsch 85 Foot Aerial Ladder 1
1962 Dodge 300 GPM Engine 4
1956 Seagrave 750 GPM Engine 5
1952 Seagrave 750 GPM Engine 1
1972 Chrysler Chief's Car
1969 Ford Fire Alarm Truck
1966 Fire Prevention Car

All of the apparatus is housed in the fire station

constructed in 1916.

A response to a box alarm in Stoneham is as follows: Stoneham Engine 2 manned by the Driver, a Captain and two Hose Men; Stoneham Ladder 1 manned by the Driver and two Ladder Men; Stoneham Engine 5 manned by the Driver, Lieutenant and a Hydrant Man. Remaining at the station to monitor any other fire calls or to carry out any orders relayed from the fire scene are the Drivers of Engines 4 and 1.

From the original 58 hydrants installed in Stoneham in 1883, we have expanded to 495, most constructed with one 4½ inch outlet and two 2½ inch outlets.

The number of fire alarm boxes has grown from 17 in 1890 to 169 in 1975 with the system now divided into five circuits.

As if to cap our 250th year, a fire occurred in Stoneham which became the most expensive ever to hit our community. On January 5th, the M.D.C. Pumping Station located at Spot Pond was involved in a fire which caused damage estimated to be \$1 million. The following is the report sent to the N.F.P.A. by Chief Sorenson regarding the blaze and the investigation which followed.

Jan. 23, 1975

Mr. Bruce Danskin
National Fire Protection Association
470 Atlantic Ave.
Boston, Mass.

Dear Sir;

The Stoneham Fire Department received an alarm from street box 37 at 9:59 A.M. on January 5, 1975. This was followed by a telephone call, informing the Department, that it was the Metropolitan District Commission Pumping Station that was on fire.

When the Two Stoneham Engine Companies and One Ladder Company arrived, large volumes of whiteish gray smoke were issuing from the eaves. The smoke hung low to the ground and only the flashing lights of the apparatus were visible.

The building was built in 1899 and was constructed of Granite and Brick exterior walls with a wood plank roof, covered by asphalt shingles, and supported by a steel structure. The station is approximately 185' x 98' and is equal in height to a 5 story building and it supplies water to Stoneham and 13 other communities. The station is manned 24 hours a day.

A second alarm was sounded by Captain

George Emery at 10:06 A.M. and a third alarm by Chief Raymond L. Sorensen at 10:12 A.M.

Fire fighters were informed that the man on duty had not been seen. However, because of zero visibility and the prior knowledge that deep engine pits existed, rescue and search efforts were extremely limited.

Fire fighting operations were limited to deck guns and ladder pipes because of the height of the building and intensity of the fire.

The hydrant in front of the pumping station was frozen. The next nearest hydrant was 1500' away.

Automatic Mutual Aid with four communities and special call to three others, brought the following total response.

At the scene: Ten Engine Companies, Two Ladder Companies, One Aerial Platform.

Covering: Two Engine Companies

Because of hydrant problems and a rapidly diminishing water supply, in the reservoir, four engines were set up at the Pond at the rear of the building.

When a fire flow in excess of 3000 gpm was attained, the fire was brought under control.

The last company was released around 9:00 P.M. and a fire watch was maintained all night.

The Metropolitan District Commission estimated the loss at \$1,000,000.

Subsequent investigation by Lt. Leo Walsh of the Massachusetts State Fire Marshall's Office and Chief Sorensen and Captain Emery of the Stoneham Department revealed the following:

It appears that either a fuel line or a lubrication line broke on the front of the Fairbanks Morse pumping engine. Why this broke is still being investigated. When this broke, a continuous supply of Diesel oil was probably ignited by the exhaust stack. A 250 gallon "day" tank located fifteen feet away supplied the fuel. This fire then melted the aluminum head of the engine and the molten metal ate away additional copper lines, indicating the tremendous amount of heat involved. The fire sent heat up into the pitched roof of the pumping room (112' x 67') located 60-70 feet above the Diesel Engine.

The under side of the roof was matched Maple boards with heavy planking over them and was readily ignited. This roof had been subject to high heat for 75 years. The Diesel Engine which was pumping at a rate of over 4,000,000 gallons / day, now had a crank-case explosion that sent the access ports on either side flying a considerable distance.

Continued on Page 36

Stoneham Fire Department — 1925



From Left to Right, C. Messer, Joseph Tansey (Driver of Comb. A.), Bill Plummer, Bun Willett, Henry Thorn, Fred Peterson, Fred Wilkens, Mit. Whitcher, Ed Perry, Dan Poore (Driver, Ladder 1), Charles Evans, Charles Brewer, Shorty Newhall, Unknown, Unknown, Sam Bruce,

John Finnegan, Albert Smith (Chief Engineer), James Lamb, Unknown, Herb Plummer (Driver of Engine 2), Fred Sweet, James McPartland, Frank Flowers, William McCall (Driver of Reo), Paul Bartlett from Wakefield Wearing a Straw Hat in Background.

Stoneham Fire Department — 1975



Front row (left to right), Lt. William McLaughlin, Lt. Charles Fitzgerald, Lt. William Meegan, Lt. George Downes, Chief Raymond Sorenson, Capt. Frank Gould, Capt. James McDermott, Capt. George Emery, Capt. William Abbott. Row 2, Charles Greenleaf, James Bowman, William Kelley, Richard LeBlanc, William Kullman, Bernard Arsenaault, Douglas Griffin, William Dockery. Row 3, Walter Johnson, Warren Newcomb,

Unable to be present for this picture was James Regan.

Russell Holden, James Halpin, William Carr, David Bettencourt, John Scullin, John Fullerton, Clarence Melonson. Row 4, León Curley, Charles Antinoro, Francis Brown, Stanton Waité, George Sowyrda, Paul Burditt, Edward Manuel, Francis Hudson, Kevin Wynne. Row 5, Robert Marshall, Robert O'Melia, Richard Marengi, Paul Courtenay, Mike Murphy, Henry D'Entremont, Robert Dunphy, Paul Bears, Sam Earle.

Other than this crankcase explosion, there was no other indication of explosion. The Fairbanks Morse Engine was on the main floor of the station and two other pumps were located in an open pit below the floor. These were relatively undamaged and one of these was in service a week later.

There is one aspect of this investigation that bothers me and, in my mind, is still unresolved. Upon my arrival at approximately 10:06 A.M., I noticed that the smoke was whiteish gray at the eaves — not black as associated with an oil fire. I went to the rear of the station and entered the rear door. I was able to go in about five feet. At this time, I did not see any flames even though the Fairbanks Morse Pump was only fifteen feet away. I could, however, hear a wood fire in progress above me. Three minutes later, as I stood outside, I noticed a tremendous amount of fire around the pumping engine. The only explanation is that perhaps the oil line or lube line that broke was so high up on the engine that ignition of the hot pressurized fuel was taking place at a point high above the engine.

It is a definite recommendation, that "day"

tanks be removed from the pumping room. This 250 gallon tank was on unprotected steel legs and had no automatic means of stopping the flow of fuel. Although, neither the tank nor the supports failed, the sight glass was broken and this assisted in the delivery of the entire 250 gallons on the fire.

Another recommendation is that automatic valves such as the firematic type be installed on all fuel lines, both at the tank and the engines.

The Engineer on duty claims that he was in another section of the building when he heard an explosion. He observed the fire and ran down the street towards a fire alarm box.

The pressure in the Town dropped eleven pounds and would have been worse except for diligent rerouting of the water supply by Superintendent of Public Works, William Reid.

Yours truly,

(Signed) Raymond L. Sorensen

Raymond L. Sorensen
Fire Chief



Stoneham Ladder 1 and Engine 2 in Operation at the M.D.C. Pumping Station. Capt. George Emery Pictured in Foreground.

Pumping Station Fire, January 5, 1975



M.D.C. Pumping Station Fire As Viewed From Across Spot Pond

The Volunteers



MEMBERS OF THE 1900 VOLUNTEERS

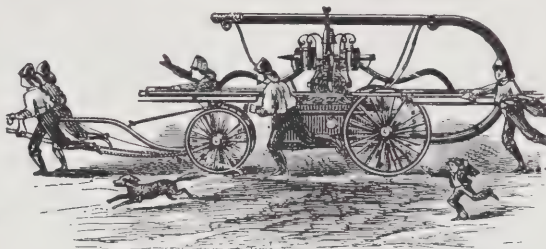
Back Row (left to right) Charles Sweet, Joseph Tansey, William Moore, Arthur Newhall. Front Row (left to right) Sam Barnstead, John Cody, Joseph Keenan, Bun Willett.



Some of the Old Fire Badges

STONEHAM.

THIS CERTIFIES



That

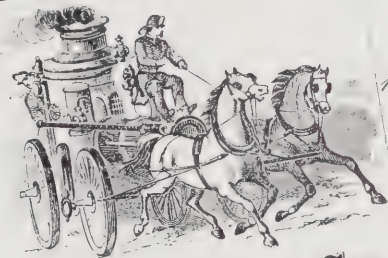
Is appointed a Member of

GENERAL WORTH ENGINE CO., No. 2,

by the **ENGINEERS** of the **STONEHAM FIRE DEPARTMENT**, and is entitled to all the immunities

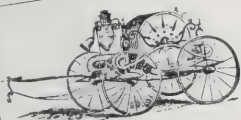
Given under

This Certifies



Chief Engineer.

Clerk of Engineer.



That

is appointed a Member of

Col. Gould Steam Fire Engine & Hose Co.

by the **Engineers** of the **Stoneham Fire Department**, and is entitled to all the immunities belonging to

THIS CERTIFIES



Chief Engineer.

Clerk of Engineer.

That **GEN. WORTH ENGINE COMPANY, No. 2,** is appointed a Member of **ENGINEERS** of the **STONEHAM FIRE DEPARTMENT**, and is entitled to all the immunities belonging to said office.

Given under my hand, this
A.D. 1868

W. C. D. 20th
W. C. D. 20th

Chief Engineer

Clerk of Engineer



No 106

The Volunteers (Continued)

No history of the Stoneham Fire Department would be complete without relating the story of those men who comprised the early volunteer fire companies. These men made up the compliment of the Resolute Hook and Ladder Company, The General Worth Engine Company, The Colonel Gould Steam Engine Company and The E. R. Seavers Hose Company. We will endeavor, through photographs, newspaper articles and especially the records and logs of these companies, to give the reader a glimpse into the life of these men.

First, let's explain just what these Volunteer Companies were. Every community, large or small, has had a volunteer Fire Department at some time during their history. These companies were one part political organization, one part fire fighting unit and partly just a place to get together for a game of cards or some friendly conversation. It was considered quite an honor to be admitted to one of these companies, and this was not a simple task. When members were first admitted, they underwent a character investigation that would have done credit to the F.B.I. Then their names went before the Board of Engineers where again they could be turned down with little or no explanation.

Following a trial period, if both the company and the new member got along, the new fireman was made to obey a rigid set of rules. Expulsion and fines were used to maintain a proper discipline among the members of these volunteer companies. Each company had its own set of by-laws. Fines of various amounts from twenty-five cents to a dollar were levied for such infractions as missing a fire, not wearing a badge or cap to a fire, absence from Engine practice, or failing to return to the Engine house after a fire. During the year the volunteers were also assessed, from time to time, for new furnishings for the company rooms, parties, uniforms and liquid refreshments. During this period the Volunteer received \$5 a year and 50¢ an hour for fighting fires. With pay measured against fines, it would seem that fire fighting was not the way to become rich.

Each Stoneham Company had its own personality. Reading through the logs and newspaper reports it became rather clear that The Resolute Hook & Ladder Company was the Aristocrat of the Volunteer Companies. Whether through better public relations or less accurate coverage of meetings in the company Logs, the Hook & Ladder comes across as a well or-

ganized, tight-knit organizations, whether it be fighting a fire or running a dance.

On the other hand, the General Worth Company leaves just the opposite impression. It is possible this impression is an unjust one. The General Worth was the oldest and by far the largest volunteer company, and because of the number of members alone, there were bound to be some problems. The other two companies fell somewhere between these two extremes. We will concentrate our story on the General Worth and the Resolute simply because they are well documented and just as important, because they are more interesting.

THE GENERAL WORTH COMPANY

The original General Worth Company was organized in 1849 and had a compliment of as high as sixty members. We do not wish to leave the impression that the General Worth Company was not an asset to Stoneham, but we will dwell, to some extent, on their problems both among themselves and with the Engineers and again, primarily because they are of most interest. So please don't judge the General Worth Company too harshly because of our rather one-sided presentation.

The General Worth Company started with high hopes and a noble purpose. The following is the preamble to their constitution written in 1858:

Feeling the importance of the speedy extinguishment of fires and being desirous of doing as much as possible for its accomplishment we hereby associate together as a company of firemen. And as our Engine bears the name of the illustrious General Worth who fought and died for his country and we feel incited to imitate in some degree the spirit of that illustrious General we adopt the name of General Worth Engine Company hoping that the undaunted spirit of Voluntary exertion which animated him may be infused into our hearts. May we never disgrace our name but use our best endeavors to maintain its high reputation.

Our Motto Shall Be:

"Our Aim the Public Good"

Rules, orders and by-laws for the General Worth Engine Company.

Rules, Orders, and By-laws for the Stoneham Engine Company.

We, the Company of Engine men in and for the Town of Stoneham, being duly authorized and appointed by the Selectmen of said Town, do ordain and establish the following by-laws for the Regulation and Government of said Company.

Article 1. Said Company shall meet annually on the first Wednesday of May, at 7 o'clock, P.M. at any place in said Town where the majority of the Company shall appoint, and at such meeting shall choose their Officers by ballot, and act on any other business they shall see fit.

Article 2. The Clerk shall call the Roll at 7 o'clock at all annual meetings. Any Member not being present to answer to his name, shall pay the sum of Fifty Cents.

Article 3. It shall be the duty of the Clerk to keep a record of each Man's name belonging to the Company and a fair record of their proceedings at each Meeting; he shall notify each Member before each Special Meeting, either personally or by leaving a message at his usual place of abode.

Article 4. If the Clerk shall be absent himself from any Meeting, or shall neglect to notify the Members as before directed, without procuring some person to discharge his duty he shall pay one dollar for each neglect and the usual fine, as a Member.

Article 5. The Company shall meet at the Engine House on the first Tuesday of every month, to Inspect and Work the Engine, at 6 o'clock, P.M.

Article 6. If any Member shall be absent from any Meeting when the roll is called, he shall pay a fine of Twenty-five cents, or should he then absent himself without the consent of the Captain, he shall pay Twenty-five Cents.

Article 7. It shall be the duty of the Company to work the Engine eight times in a year, beginning on the first Tuesday of April, and oftener if the Officers direct; and at any Meeting when the Engine is worked and returned to the House, the Roll shall be called.

Article 8. If any Member shall be absent at any Fire, or shall neglect to assist in working the Engine, or returning it to the House again, at such time, unless prevented by sickness or absence from Town, he shall pay a fine of One Dollar.

Article 9. All the aforesaid fines and penalties, shall be collected by the Clerk for the use of the Company, by suit or otherwise as the Officers shall direct.

Article 10. The Clerk shall keep a fair account of all Monies he received, and all he shall pay out, and it shall be left with the Company at the close of the Year, to reward him for his services.

Article 11. If any Member shall be negligent of his duty, or shall conduct himself in a disorderly or unbecoming manner, a remonstrance or petition for his removal may be presented to the Selectmen, at any time when a majority of the Company shall direct.

Article 12. No Person shall be admitted a Member of the Company without the consent of two thirds of the Members present at the Meetings for filling vacancies unless appointed by the Selectmen.*

Article 13. Any Member may be dismissed from the Company, by paying his fines and applying to the Captain.

Article 14. The Officers of said Company shall be a Standing Committee to order all repairs or removals of the Engine, and to call Special Meetings when they shall think proper.

Article 15. There shall be chosen every year at some of the Company's Meetings, a Committee to settle with the Clerk examine his Books and report at the Annual Meeting.

Article 16. Each Member shall be furnished with a Copy of the By-Laws, as soon as they are printed.

Article 17. Any alterations or additions of the above By-Laws may be made at any time, by a vote of two thirds of the Members.

We the Subscribers, Selectmen of the Town of Stoneham, have examined and do approve the within Laws.

Darius Stevens
Reuben Richardson, Jr.
Ira Gerry — 1849

*Just a note of explanation — until 1857 there was no Board of Engineers. Until that time the Selectmen were in charge of the Fire Department.

With an auspicious start like that how could anything go wrong? We soon shall see.

We do not have the log of the General Worth for its first nine years of existence, but apparently they were not idle. The first entry in the log dated May 18, 1858 is as follows:

Voted to put a card in the Boston Herald also in the Firemans Advocate returning thanks to the Eagle Cook for that bountiful supply of refreshments furnished at the fire, also thanking the Hook and Ladder boys for assistance in working the machine, to Tidd F. Bloomer for the use of horses to draw the Tub to

and from the fire, to Mr. Dix of the South Reading Engineers, and last but not least to all volunteers who lent a helping hand.

June 1, 1858 – Voted to work the Engine every Saturday evening at 6½ o'clock during the next two months providing the weather is suitable.

(A little indecision seems to have occurred at several meetings in June and July).

June 26, 1858 – Voted to assess each member 50¢ payable on next Saturday evening.

Voted not to reconsider the last vote.

July 3, 1858 – Voted to reconsider the vote, whereby we voted not to reconsider the vote to make assessment of 50 cents.

(I think all this means is that they didn't pay the 50 cents). Back to firefighting:

July 25, 1858 – Went to Reading to a fire this morning about 5 o'clock. Voted to put a card in the Boston Herald thanking the Eagle Engine Co. No. 4 of Reading for their bountiful supply of refreshments, to Mr. Ira Ruggles of Reading for favors received – and last but not least to the Volunteers for their assistance in drawing the Tub to and from the fire.

(Again indecision raises its head).

Aug. 18, 1858 – Voted to come out on the 28th at 3 o'clock P.M. to fill Mr. Dikes reservoir and partake of a collation after filling it.

Voted to invite Hook & Ladder boys to help fill the reservoir.

Aug. 28, 1858 – Voted not to fill Mr. Dikes reservoir unless ordered so by the Engineers.

Sept. 1, 1858 – Company met according to by-laws and took the Tub to the reservoir on the common played a very good stream.

Voted to reconsider the vote whereby we voted not to fill Mr. Dikes reservoir.

Voted to turn out at 6½ o'clock P.M. on the day the reservoir is ready, the flag to be raised to notify the company.

(It should be remembered that these reservoirs were quite often the only source of water for fighting fires).

Sept. 11, 1858 – Company met according to vote, took the Tub to the reservoir on the common and played into Mr. Dike's reservoir, filled it almost full in 40 minutes.

(More major decisions to be made).

Tuesday, Nov. 2, 1858 – Voted that the company go to Winchester next Saturday evening.

Voted to hire a team to go to Winchester.

Voted that the company go to Winchester in

citizens dress except the officers.

(It would seem the General Worth Company was going to Winchester. We are afraid not).

Thursday, Nov. 4, 1858 – Voted not to go to Winchester unless we are sent for.

(Even the social events were running into trouble).

Dec. 16, 1858 – Voted to have a dance on 14th of January.

Jan. 8, 1859 – Voted to instruct the door keeper at our dance not to let in any male spectators.

(The precaution was not too effective, apparently)

Sat., Jan. 15, 1859 – Voted to pay for the lamps that were broken at the dance.

(Another entry).

April 28, 1859 – Voted that J. B. Sturtevant set down and mind his own business. (That's telling it like it is.)

(More trouble in the ranks from two recently discharged members.)

Dec. 6, 1859 – A report called for from the Committee chosen at the last meeting, that went to see Hersam and Leufler in regards to the uniforms in their possession.

Reported they would fetch them in tonight.

Voted to instruct the committee to tell Hersam and Leufler we shall proceed to legal maneuvers to get the uniforms in their possession if not given up immediately.

Report of the Hersam and Leufler committee called for. Hersam and Leufler said they would fetch them in when they pleased.

Voted to proceed with legal maneuvers against Hersam and Leufler.

Voted that before proceeding to legal maneuvers we send one more Committee to see them tonight.

Report: We have done our duty, we got the uniforms and the men are here to answer for themselves.

(So ends the saga of Hersam and Leufler. We are sorry to say their answers were never recorded for history).

It was the custom of the era to wine and dine the out of town Volunteer Companies that responded to a fire in a neighboring community. It is altogether possible that this is the reason we find in the log so many out of town runs made by the Stoneham Companies and vice versa. This would help explain the following entry:

Dec. 1, 1863 – Voted to instruct our Treasurer

to buy 2 gallons of Whiskey to be used in case of fires in Town.

(Fire fighting was a thirsty business).

Stoneham was not without its vandalism and, of course, it was directed against the General Worth Engine House.

April 5, 1864 — The stewards reported that the hall had been entered during the preceding week by some person or persons unknown. That the curtains had been torn and soiled, the furniture broken and mutilated and several other acts of meanness.

Voted to pay a reward of twenty-five dollars for information which will lead to the arrest and conviction of the perpetrators of the above acts.

(Most of the General Worth's problems were kept within the company until 1878. At this point their problems became the Engineers' problems too!)

From the log of the Stoneham Engineers:

Feb. 5, 1878 — This meeting was called to look into the conduct of some of the members of the General Worth Company.

Feb. 7, 1878 — Engineers voted to give P. McCall and Cotting a dishonorable discharge from the General Worth Company.

(Again that same year):

Dec. 13, 1878 — Voted to approve Walker's bill.

Voted that the board sustain the Chief in his decision not to allow the General Worth Company refreshments at the run down to the pond at the burning of the barn.

Voted that after this date we allow a collation to any company that desires it, that gets water through the hose onto the fire.

(It would appear that the General Worth Company were reaping the rewards without first earning them.

The General Worth was not above a little apple polishing to help their cause.)

From the log of the Engineers:

April 13, 1881 — A communication was received from the General Worth Company donating the sum of six dollars to the Engineers from their share of the Wakefield Gift as a token of their esteem.

(This money came from a gift of \$100 given to the Stoneham Fire Department by the Wakefield Rattan factory for their help in fighting a fire in their factory. We find nowhere in the Engineer's log of any other donations made by the other Companies.

Whatever the reason for the donation was, the "Worthies" were not able to stay in good graces indefinitely.)

Dec. 8, 1883 — To hereby prohibit the use or keeping intoxicating liquors in the General Worth House.

In December 1883, the General Worth Engine Company was disbanded and became the General Worth Hose Company. The membership dropped from 65 to 15 men. From this point on, it's history grew rather dull compared with it's past. Again, I would apologize to the reader and to the past members of the General Worth Company for possibly dwelling too long on the problems of the Company over the years.

The records of the General Worth Company cover a twenty-five year period and contain many fire calls where the Company responded with utmost speed and work with courage and determination to extinguish these fires, but in all honesty, at least in the General Worth's case, the records kept of the meetings and the problems encountered make much more interesting and entertaining reading.

One last entry from the General Worth Engine Company.

Dec. 8, 1883 — Special Meeting of the General Worth Engine Company.

Voted to reconsider the vote whereby we voted to hold our annual ball, the first Friday in February, 1884.

That the first five officers and Thomas Grady be a committee to settle up the affairs of the Company.

To give the water pitcher and goblets to the St. Patrick's Temperance Society of Stoneham.

To give the trumpet and case to the Foreman, P. W. Wilkins.

To give desk and mirror to the Clerk, N. P. Chick.

To give the clock to the 1st Assistant, T. J. Sullivan.

To draw lots of the pictures.

To give wall board to the new company.

To give Indian Clubs to Company H of Stoneham.

To give the paper rack to Coleman Neg.

To pay all bills against the company.

To have a meeting Saturday, Dec. 15th, in St. Patrick's Temperance room in Dow block.

To extend a vote of thanks to the officers of the company.

To disband

N. R. Chick, Clerk

The Engineers decided to go further in their attempt to stamp out "demon Rum". Apparently deciding that the reorganization which took place in

early 1884 was a good time to make some major policy changes, the Engineers called a special meeting.

March 17, 1884 Special Meeting of the Board of Engineers:

Voted that we do not allow any collation to be served hereafter at fires with the exception of hot coffee.

The hue and cry that arose over this decision must have been something to behold for this is the only instance we could find where the Engineers buckled under pressure.

One week after their original decision this entry appears in their log:

March 24, 1884 – Voted to reconsider the vote passed at our last meeting whereby we voted not to allow collations at fires.

THE RESOLUTE HOOK & LADDER COMPANY

The first H & L was purchased in 1855 and we would imagine the Volunteer Company was formed shortly thereafter, but it is not until 1874 that we really get a good look at the Resolute Hook & Ladder Company. The log which starts in May of 1874 is quite different from that of the General Worth. As an example, the following is a report of a fire written first by the Clerk of the General Worth and then by J. E. Wiley of the Resolute:

April 6 – Fire at Jonathon Thompson's house on Summerhill Street.

April 6 – The Company was called out about 1 o'clock this morning by an alarm of fire caused by the burning of an unoccupied house owned by Jonathan Thompson on Summerhill Street. The Company covered the house with ladders and made good use of the Johnson pumps in putting out the last of the fire. A. T. Hadly had a narrow escape from being impaired by falling plastering.

In large measure we feel it was one individual who should be given much of the credit for the superior records left by the H & L Company. His name was J. E. Wiley and he was Clerk of the H & L Company from 1874 until 1888. Mr. Wiley must have been a historian at heart, for in his log of the Resolute Company he left a clear concise written account of each meeting, social event and fire call. He went even further and had the foresight to include items taken from the local newspapers.

The log starts out very business like with an election of officers:

May 7, 1874 – Elected E. R. Seavers Foreman.

Elected P. P. Abbott Assistant Foreman. Elected J. E. Wiley Clerk.

Future meetings dealt with the purchases of the Company:

June 2nd – Voted to choose a committee of two to procure a Fire Horn for use of the company.

Voted to choose a committee of three to consider the subject of paying David Moran for the use of his horse in drawing the truck to fires.

The committee reported \$2.50 for every fire.

Voted to accept and adopt the report.

You might think the committee worked pretty fast in coming to an agreement with David Moran. He was a member of the company and was in attendance at this meeting.

The "Hookies" as they were nicknamed, even took care of the needs of the horses:

Voted that Wm. Bells be a committee to procure a blanket for the use of the horse at fires to be kept on the truck when not in use.

Aug. 4, 1874 – The committee on Fire Horn reported that they had procured a fire horn and cord at an expense of \$12.90.

(This fire horn served a very important function in the operation of the Volunteers).

Article 15 of the By-Laws of the H & L Company

When the H & L carriage is housed a fire horn shall be kept on the spire, and on the alarm of fire the active member who first secures the horn – shall have command until the arrival of the foreman, assistant foreman, or clerk, and on the arrival of either of the above named officers he shall give up the horn.

The social functions were not ignored either:

Oct. 6, 1874 – Voted to choose a committee of five to make arrangements for the Ball.

Voted to instruct the committee to engage Norton's Band (finally they got around to choosing a name).

Nov. 3, 1874 – Voted to adopt the name of the Resolute Hook and Ladder Company No. 1.

Voted that the motto of the company be:

"Ever Loyal to the Call of Duty"

(While the Resolute may stand out as the best Fire Company they did seem to lack something when it came to their baseball team).

Aug. 3, 1875 – A communication was received from the Colonel Gould Steam Fire Engine Co. No. 3 challenging our company to play a game of baseball on Saturday, August 7th.

Voted – To refer the communication to a committee of three who, after mature deliberation, report-

ed that as three of our best players could not be present on that day it was inexpedient to accept the challenge.

(After reading the following newspaper accounts of two ball games between the Resolute H & L and Hose 3 of Medford, one can readily understand why the Colonel Gould challenge went unanswered.)

Baseball:

The first baseball game of the season in Stoneham was played on the old Kearsarge grounds last Saturday afternoon, by Hose 3 of Medford and the Hookies of Stoneham, the former proving the victors by a score of 40 to 14. Owing to rain, only seven innings were played. George Gerry umpired the game to the entire satisfaction of all. In the evening the clubs and their friends retired to the rooms of Resolute H & L Company and partook of a supper given by the Hookies, and the time was pleasantly spent.

Baseball:

The Mitchell Hose Co. No. 3 played the return game with the Resolute of Stoneham on the Common last Saturday. This game was remarkably close, 62-9. The Mitchell's winning by only 53 runs. After the game the victorious Hosemen escorted the captured Hooks to the hose house on Park Street where both nines handled the forks and knives in a manner surprisingly skillful for amateurs.

(As you may have noted, every occasion became an excuse for a party. Even a fire was not all work).

Jan. 18, 1876 — The company was called out by an alarm of fire caused by the burning of a barn owned by David Morin of the Company. The Washington H & L and the Yale Hose of Wakefield were present and were entertained by the Stoneham Fire Department after the fire.

(We do not want you to think all fires were such fun).

Nov. 3, 1878 — The Company was called out by an alarm of fire in Melrose. The Colonel Gould Steam Engine and the Resolute responded to the call. It was a cold morning and several members of the Company were frostbitten.

(And sometimes discretion was the better part of valor):

April 1, 1879 — The Company was called out at 3 o'clock this morning by a fire in Wakefield and another in Woburn. At the same time a severe snow storm was raging and the company did not leave the house.

(While this sounds rather cold-blooded, it should be mentioned that in some instances, the Stoneham

Department couldn't even reach fires in Stoneham during snow storms. This can be attested to by the following items from the log:)

Feb. 3, 1881 — The company was called out at 7:34 o'clock this evening by an alarm of fire caused by the burning of a barn on Marble Street, belonging to Messer Hayward. There being a heavy fall of snow on the ground, the building was entirely destroyed before the arrival of the Company.

March 31, 1881 — The Company was called out at 2-3 o'clock this morning by an alarm of fire caused by the burning of a barn belonging to William Costello. There was just enough snow on the ground to make the truck draw hard and the barn was burnt to the ground before the arrival of the Department.

(While the Hookies no doubt had the best public relations man on the Department, their apparent supremacy did not always go unchallenged as can be seen in this difference of opinion about who did what at a fire. This article is from the Sentenial.)

At 8:30 Thursday an alarm of fire was sounded caused by the partial burning of a house on Taylor Court, occupied by John Bresnahan. The Resolute Hook & Ladder was earliest on the ground and for the first time in the history of the Company, succeeded in getting on the first stream. A Topley extinguisher is carried on the truck and while in operation did good service. The H & L not only got the first stream, but had the good fortune also to get on the second with a Johnson pump. Pretty good for the Hook & Ladder boys.

(And in rebuttal:)

Article from the Independent
Mr. Editor:

In looking over the columns of the Sentenial, I notice somebody had undertaken to give a description of the fire on Thursday morning, and I should judge by the way the notice reads, that the H & L Company had done all the duty and consequently was entitled to all the praise. The writer should not forget that the steamer was first to reach the reservoir, with General Worth next and the H & L last, and reached the burning building first simply because that was their place. Now if the writer claims the first stream for the H & L Co. would it not be well for the Engineers to purchase some pocket syringes and water pails for use of the steamer and General Worth Companies. Then they would be on equal footing with the H & L. We would ask the originator of the piece in the Senteniel, if no other water had been put on the house except what came from

the Johnson pump and the Temperance Soda Fountain, where the house would have gone?

Citizen

An entry on March 12, 1881:

The Company was called out about 1 o'clock this morning by an alarm of fire caused by the burning of the Wakefield Rattan Works. The Company did good work in covering the building with ladders and would have done much more if we had been allowed to do so.

(The Rattan Works sent the Stoneham Department a check for \$100. This was divided up between the three Stoneham Companies and this was the money used by the General Worth Company to do their apple polishing.)

(Even the high and mighty Hook & Ladder Company had some problems as we can glimpse from an entry on June 7, 1881:)

Voted to dispose of what liquor we have on hand and not have any more in the house in any way, shape or manner.

A motion was made that it be turned down the sink. An amendment was offered that it be kept for auction.

(Cooler and more practical heads prevailed).

Voted that it be divided among the members.

While it was being divided the Company adjourned.

The Engineers did not automatically pay all bills submitted to them by the Volunteer Companies. They did, however, soften the rejections with some flowery words, at least to the Hook & Ladder Company, as the following letter from the Engineers to the Hookies shows:

Stoneham, Oct. 1879

To the officers and members of Resolute H & L.

After due consideration with much thought for your interests and welfare and that of the whole department we return to you these bills **not approved** hoping that you will not censure us too harshly in our attempts to govern the whole department.

Yours truly,
Moses Downs
Daniel N. Willy
M. J. Terren

These bills were for pulling the ladder truck to

two fires — one on the 31st of May, the Ames Ice House, and the other, June 11th to Mann & Bracketts Shoe Factory. Why these bills were not paid is not clear, but for whatever reason they made an impression.

Voted not to hire a horse hereafter.

The Town of Stoneham purchased a new ladder truck in 1881 and its arrival in town was made an event to remember.

Stoneham, July 2, 1881:

The Company assembled at 2 P.M. and proceeded to Woburn in barges with the Stoneham Brass Band to get the new truck after partaking of refreshments at the expense of Pallard Parker, the builders. The Company went to the house of Mr. Parker with the Band and gave him a serenade. The Company then proceeded to Stoneham after loading the ladders and other apparatus on the truck. The Company paraded through the principal streets. At 8 o'clock the Company with their Ladies and invited guests assembled in the Town Hall and indulged in dancing until 10 o'clock when they took up the Line of March to one of the Schoolrooms below where a bountiful collation had been spread by the Lady friends of the Company after which remarks were made by the Engineer's W. M. Turner and others. At the conclusion of the services at the table, the Company returned again to the hall and danced until about 12 when the Company dispersed much pleased with the new truck.

(Now, that was the way to receive a new Fire Truck.)

There are many more fire calls and parties recorded in the Resolute Log and we have included many of the newspaper items covering these events on the following pages. We will end our story of the Volunteers with one more entry from the log. It would seem that someone left a bottle of liquor in the Resolute Company's room, apparently in hopes of convincing the members to vote for a liquor license for the Town in upcoming elections. It would seem he badly misjudged the Hookies.

March 12, 1884 — Voted to take the jug presented to the Company before election and empty the contents into the street in the presence of Mr. Richard Plummer.

Voted that the first three officers and the Steward be a committee to draw up suitable resolutions in regard to the same and have them inserted in the local papers.

Vote of Indignation.

Last Wednesday evening the members of Resolute H. & L. Company held an indignation meeting to take action in regard to the jug of rum sent to their hall the Saturday previous to election. They also emptied the contents of the jug into the gutter, in the presence of witnesses. The result of the meeting was this vote:

RESOLUTE H. & L. HALL.

March 12th, 1884.

To the citizens of Stoneham:

Whereas, certain persons, or some one to us unknown, took the liberty to send this company, or caused to be left at our Hall, one jug containing, as we are informed, a certain quantity of Whiskey, of doubtful quality, the night previous to the late Town Meeting, with the evident intention thereby to influence our votes in favor of license;

Be it therefore Resolved, That this company, organized as they are for the public good, desiring to command public confidence, and the good opinion of our fellow citizens, we hereby PUBLICLY DENOUNCE the attempt to influence and tamper with our sacred rights at the Ballot Box as an insult to our organization and to our manhood.

Per order,

RESOLUTE H. & L. CO.



Picture of old Hook and Ladder Company outside the fire station in the basement of the Old Town Hall (later the Center School) about 50 years ago.

Front row (left to right) John Gilson, Doc Cutts, Walter Patchett, William Lamb, Charles Cloutman, Mit Whitchee, Harry Pineo. Back row, George Barnstead, Adrian Moore, Dave Luce, Charles Evans, Fred Wilkins, Arthur Johnson, Louis Van Buskirk, Sam Barnstead, John Foshey.

A \$35,000 Blaze.

Currying Shop and Dwelling House Burned.

A few minutes before the clock struck one, Friday morning, the shrill blasts of the fire alarm aroused our citizens, and in a few minutes the streets were full of pedestrians, guided to the scene of conflagration on Hancock street by the bright light from flames issuing from the currying shop of M. H. Fitzgerald. The fire department were promptly on hand, but the combustible nature of the contents of the large wooden factory soon enveloped the whole building in a blaze, and it was seen that it would be useless to attempt to save it, so the attention of the firemen were directed to the dwelling house on the west side, owned and occupied by Mr. Fitzgerald, and only separated from the currying shop by a few dozen feet. The fire was intensely hot and the firemen were placed at a great disadvantage in contending with the flames. When it was seen that not only was this house in danger of being destroyed, but that the dwelling houses on the east side of the shop and those on the opposite side of the street might share a like fate, the alarm was sounded for assistance from Woburn, and the steamer, several hose carriages and two ladder trucks, in charge of chief engineer Littlefield and assistants, were on hand in twenty-five minutes from the time the alarm was given. The steamer was set at the reservoir near Jerome Fay's residence on Hancock street, and did valuable service in subduing the flames.

The currying shop was burned level with the ground, and the dwelling on

the west side was badly gutted. Although quite a space intervened between the shop and the houses on the east side, the paint was badly blistered and the roofs caught fire in places from the heat and sparks, but were prevented from spreading and doing any damage. William Whowell's house opposite was saved by a liberal use of pails of water and the protection afforded by a large tree in front. The

spread of the fire looked so threatening that the families occupying the houses adjoining on the east removed all their furniture. The greater part of the furniture in Mr. Fitzgerald's residence was also removed in a damaged condition. The house was well finished, and had been lately newly-furnished. All the lower part was frescoed in oil, it was heated by steam throughout, with every other convenience.

Nothing was saved from the currying shop. The origination of the fire is thought by Mr. Fitzgerald to have been incendiary. It seems to have been discovered by several persons about the same time, who saw the reflection from the fire. Mr. O. Sampson living opposite was awoken by his wife and he immediately came to the door and called fire, partly dressed himself and crossed over and rapped for Mr. Fitzgerald, who was already up. At about the same time Mr. Wm. Whowell started up town and gave the alarm to the watchman at Tidd's tannery. The stable was at the extreme north end of the factory, and Mr. Fitzgerald was enabled to save his horse and carriage. Those living near speak of hearing two loud explosions just after the fire was discovered. This was caused, the owner thinks, by

something heavy falling on the pipe of the safety valve, breaking it, and can be explained in several other ways. Mr. Fitzgerald had lately made considerable improvements on the building, had added some new machinery, piped the building throughout and was preparing to do a larger business than ever before, and had about twenty men employed. A large lot of finished stock was in the shop and more than the usual quantity of unfinished.

The fire department worked unceasingly until after daylight, and both engineers and firemen are deserving of praise for their efforts to subdue the flames. The quick response of the Woburn department to the call for aid merit the thanks of the citizens, which are tendered in another column by the engineers. Should assistance ever be required in their town the Woburn department and peo-

ple can depend on there being a hearty and prompt response.

The books and papers in the office were all destroyed. The insurance on the house is \$2,500, furniture, \$2,700. Insurance on currying shop, stock, machinery, etc, \$24,000. Loss estimated at \$30,000. Mr. Fitzgerald will probably rebuild at once.

The alarm at one o'clock Friday afternoon was caused by a re-kindling of some of the burnt wood by smouldering embers.

CARD.

THE thanks of the citizens and Fire Department of Stoneham are hereby extended to the Fire Department of Woburn for the prompt response to our call this morning. Gentlemen, your timely assistance in the hour of danger is fully acknowledged and appreciated.

E. R. SEAVER,
M. J. FERREN,
O. A. DODGE,
Engineers of Stoneham Fire Department.
Stoneham, Aug. 6th, 1880.

Shortly after the whistles had ceased blowing. Monday evening, several workmen employed in R. C. Huntress & Co.'s planing and moulding mill and box manufactory who had remained a few moments after six o'clock were alarmed by the discovery of a small cloud of smoke entering the box nailers' room in which they were, from the drying room in the south-west corner of the flat. They gave the alarm and began to carry out their tools, some of which were saved together with a few boxes, but the men were driven down by the stifling smoke and sought to save property in other parts of the mill. By this time the devouring flames had swept quickly through the building, fed by the dry shavings and lumber. Many persons were hurrying in and out of the burning building, carrying belts, tools; anything that was light enough to admit of being moved. Some turning tools, a chest of carpenter's tools and most of the belts were taken from the front shop. The main belt was cut and pulled from the fly wheel of the engine. The engineer, Mr. Goodwin, had examined the engine and boiler rooms preparatory to leaving them for the night and had started up the railroad toward home; seeing the smoke, he ran back and set the whistle to blowing. The door of the office building was broken in, and the chairs, desks and a safe were removed to a place of safety. Scores of men were working busily in the sheds at the rear of the mill; some carrying the boxes and mouldings across the railroad track out of harms way, others throwing them at the heads of their neighbors. The cemetery, railroad and the street were crowded with lookers-on. The office and carriage shed near it were consumed. The wind had veered from south-west, from which quarter it blew at the outbreak of the fire, to due west, and hopes were entertained that the stable and storage building might be saved. Many of

were protected by the H. & L. Co. At length the fire began to creep toward the stable shed: now the need of a good supply of water was practically evinced, but it was unobtainable, and the fire reached the loose boards on the east side of the building; in five minutes it was at the mercy of the flames. The lumber near the cemetery was about all that remained. The cars passed through the crowd of spectators several times, but fortunately no accident happened from this cause, though Mike Purcell was pulled from the track just in time to escape being struck by the approaching engine. The

FIRE DEPARTMENT

was promptly on the spot and worked hard to save the property, but the main building was beyond control before they arrived. The stable would doubtless have been saved had not the Gen. Worth company been prevented by the intense heat from working their engine at the reservoir in front of the mill, in an attempt to do which, the crew were compelled after a few strokes to leave the tub exposed to the fire, from which position it was afterward hauled by bystanders, considerably scorched. The steamer was stationed first at Leeds' corner where there was no water; afterwards on Main street, opposite Jim Dugan's gin mill, and then back of the Congregational church, but at this place, though there was enough water, it could not be thrown to the scene of the fire with sufficient force to be of much service.

The total loss is \$25,000; the insurance, in different companies, \$10,000. The mill will not be rebuilt, but the business will hereafter be conducted in Parker's mill, Woburn.

INCENDIARISM.

Outrage on a Respected and Inoffensive Resident!

UNIVERSAL INDIGNATION EXPRESSED!

About 12.15 on Sunday morning Mrs. Lavinia Bryant, an old and respected resident of this town, and a widow 80 years old, was awakened from her sleep by the smell of smoke in her house on Main street. The bed-chamber, kitchen, parlor, and several other rooms are on the same floor, and Mrs. Bryant rose for the purpose of investigating the cause of the smoke. She looked everywhere in the rear of the house without discovering anything unusual. Two young ladies—Miss Mary Howe and Miss Myra Osgood, the former a book-keeper with Mr. E. F. Saurin, and the latter book-keeper with Mr. W. H. Richardson,—reside in Mrs. Bryant's house, and hearing her moving around at so late an hour, called to her and asked what she was doing. She replied that she was trying to find the cause of the smoke which pervaded her apartments. The young ladies dressed as quickly as possible, and hastened around to Mrs. Bryant's apartments. Miss Osgood entered the parlor, where she found the smoke almost suffocating, but she could not locate the fire. She then went round on the outside, placed her ear close to the house, and distinctly heard the crackling sound of fire. She immediately gave the alarm, and started up to the centre, notifying George Pillsbury, whose barber-shop was open, of the fire. The courageous young lady then ran to Tidd's tannery, when a general alarm was sounded.

Now a word about the manner in which the incendiary had set about his work.

A clean-cut hole, made with a 3-4 inch augur, was found near the corner of the building. As luck would have it the axeman did not cut away this hole. Had he done so, there would have been no indication that the building was fired. The hole had been bored, kerosene oil poured in, probably from a bottle, as the building near the hole indicated, and then a cork inserted into the hole. It was a fortunate thing that the hole was bored just below the brace to the corner post, which prevented the fire from spreading upward and working along between the floor and ceiling. If the hole had been a foot higher the building would have fared worse.

The house stands a few feet off from the street, the night was pitch dark and a person could work, unseen from across the street, or dodge around the building when they heard footsteps. The

Parade of the Stoneham Fire Department.

The Second Annual Parade of the Fire Department took place yesterday, and they were favored with as fine weather as the most sanguine could desire. A large gathering of our citizens, dressed in holiday attire, thronged the square and line of march, and men and women, afoot and in private conveyances, from our neighboring towns, helped to swell the throng, and seemed deeply interested in the fine display of the Department.

The procession was formed in front of the Town Hall, and started at half past one, in the following order:

Chief Marshall A. E. Hersey,
Squad of Police.
Stoneham Brass Band.
Engineers Eastman, Nary and Dike.
Town Officers.
Firemen from Wakefield, Reading, Melrose and Woburn.
Hook and Ladder Co. No. 1, Capt. E. R. Seaver, 23 men.
Gen. Worth Engine Co., Capt. O. A. Dodge, 45 men.
Gen. Worth Hose Carriage.
Col. Gould Hose Carriage, Capt. F. Gilbert 17 men.
Col. Gould Steam Fire Engine.

The route was through the following streets. Up Central to Pleasant, through Pleasant, Washington, Elm, Main, Hersam, Wright, Hancock, Main, Summer, Pond, Franklin, through the Square, up Main, through Common, to their respective houses. After the delay incident to preliminary preparation, the Hook and Ladder men were given the signal, and with their apparatus, ran through Central street to the Square in 55 seconds, dismounted their ladders, spliced them, and raised one measuring 60 feet on to Hersam's building, and Mr. Jas. Barrett mounted the top in 2 minutes and 30 seconds from the time of starting.

The Gen. Worth engine ran from their house over the same route, and reached the square in 1 min., and played a stream on to Hersam's building in 2 min. and 10 sec.

The Col. Gould steamer and Hose Carriage ran through Common and Main streets, and reached the square in 1.55, and played through 800 feet of hose, time 13.15. They afterwards played 150 ft. 8 ins. through 200 feet, using 1 1-8 inch nozzle, and 169 ft. 3 ins. with a 7-8 inch nozzle.

While the steamer was in operation the rapid explosions from the new safety valve, frightened the young black horse owned by James Forrest, which was standing in front of the residence of Mrs. John Hill, and becoming unmanageable, he caused havoc with several teams in the vicinity—a buggy containing Mr. Bebee of Wakefield and Miss Ingersoll of Woburn, was upset; the dasher, one hind wheel and whiffletree completely destroyed, but the occupants escaped without serious injury. One or two other carriages were slightly damaged: Forrest's team escaped uninjured.

The trial of a horizontal stream by the Gen. Worth Co., developed a distance of 182 feet through 200 feet of hose, with a 7-8 nozzle. This closed the exercises of the day, and the machines were hosed, after which a procession formed, and headed by the band, marched to Harmony Hall, where tables were set for the 200, and filled with an abundance of food. Mr. Geo. L. Child acted as caterer, and maintained his well-known reputation.

Chief Engineer W. H. Eastman called the assembly to order, and introduced Rev. E. B. Fairchild, who offered prayer. After supper, the Chief introduced Mr. M. J. Ferren as toast master of the occasion, who fittingly responded to the compliment, and filled the position in a very acceptable manner.

The first toast was—

"The day we celebrate;" and Chief Engineer W. H. Eastman was called upon to respond, but in an off hand manner, relieved himself of the responsibility, and introduced Mr. John Best, who spoke in terms of approbation of the celebration, and closed with this complimentary sentiment to the department:

"The Hookies, and the Fire Department as a body. May their Worth be more appreciated and their *Go(u)ld* remain above par, their basis being the public confidence."

"The Stoneham Fire Department, ever ready to respond to the alarm of fire, with promptness worthy of imitation by any department in the Commonwealth. The pride of our citizens

and the bulwark of our mutual safety." Responded to by Amos Hill, Esq., who gave a short historical account of the Stoneham Fire Department, and the progress it had made in efficiency since its organization.

"HOOK AND LADDER No. 1.

"For many years an useless appendage, without an organized company. Its virtue is now recognized. The hill top of efficiency has been attained, and under the gallant Seaver, is ever ready to respond to duty's call. When they throw their hooks and grapples, look out, or down comes your house."

Appropriately responded to by Capt. Seaver.

"GEN. WORTH No. 2,

"Tried and true. Their general worth is known and appreciated, and when their services are required, we know they never *dodge*. Capt. Dodge was called upon to respond, but having dodged out previous to the call, Asst. Hersey responded.

"COL. GOULD No. 3,

"Like its illustrious namesake, ever ready in time of danger with willing hearts and hands. May they, like him, ever deserve the high appreciation they hold in the hearts of their fellow townsmen."

Response by Capt. Gilbert and Rev. E. B. Fairchild.

"The Department of ye ancient days; composed of stalwarth men, good and true. Response by Hon. G. W. Dike.

"The Press and our invited guests." Response by John L. Parker of the Woburn Journal; Engineer Simonds of Melrose; Chief Engineer Gilchrist of Woburn, and C. H. Daniels.

The sentiment to the ladies of Stoneham closed the list of toasts, and was willingly responded to by Benjamin Hibbard, who is ever ready to do honor to the fair.

The days festivities closed in the evening with a grand ball at the Town Hall, and reflects credit on the Chief Engineer and his Assistants, the whole department, and the citizens generally, for the successful manner with which it was carried out.

Fire Last Night.

House and Contents Burned.

Narrow Escape of the Inmates.

The alarm of fire about 3:30 o'clock this morning summoned the department to Pond street, where the house of Frank Murphy was in a blaze, and before the flames succumbed to the efforts of the firemen the structure was levelled to the ground. The first intimation the inmates had of the fire, was by the dog running into the bedroom off the kitchen and barking, which awoke Mrs. Murphy. She immediately aroused her husband, who attempted to make his way into the kitchen but was driven back by the dense smoke. He then seized a chair, and demolished a bedroom window, passed the children out and had barely time to escape himself, before the place was all ablaze. He saved but a few pieces of clothing for himself and wife, and what lay near that belonged to the children. One little girl did not have a stitch to put on, but was promptly cared for by neighbors, as all the family were. Mr. Murphy did not succeed in saving a single article worth naming. His month's pay he took out of his pocket and placed in the clock, after coming from work, and the money was consumed by the flames. The house was owned by Mr. Murphy, and he has some insurance, but what amount did not learn. Mr. Murphy is a hard-working, industrious man, in the employ of Wm. Tidd & Co., with a family of four or five children, and the loss falls very heavy on him. The fire is supposed to have caught from a defect in the chimney, starting in a closet.

FIRE IN DOW'S BLOCK.

About 7.15 on Saturday morning, smoke was seen to issue through the window-crevices in C. O. Tay's billiard hall, and while some of our citizens were deliberating about the cause, an alarm was sounded for Dist. No. 1. Notwithstanding the fact that the "General Worths" had held their annual ball on the previous evening, the whole department responded immediately, and did excellent work—confining the fire to very narrow limits. To do this the engineers deemed it necessary to pursue their usual policy of deluging the building with water. The heat was so intense, and the smoke was so dense, that it was impossible to gain any knowledge of the exact location and extent of the fire. When Charlie Tay entered the window to secure his money, he was obliged to dip his cap in water and press it down over his ears and as much of his face as possible. The course of the engineers has been severely condemned by some of our citizens, but it must be remembered that the responsibility rests on the former, and not on the latter.

Whitcher Bros. greatly facilitated matters by hitching their horse to the hand-engine, and helping the men.

J. E. Wiley don't deserve the "raking down" that he expects. He was acting under orders when he broke in the window.

It is remarkable that so small a fire should cause so much damage, but the blistered state of the walls, the billiard boards, the doors, and the ceilings, and the cracked and smoked glass (there was only one whole, good light left in the hall) testify to the great heat, which justified the engineers in flooding the room.

The Gen. Worths stood in the square, the Steamer at the Congregational Church. The latter had a hose run through Central street and another through Main street. If the fire had threatened to be of large proportions they could have attacked it on both sides of the building. The new relief valve worked splendidly, and many of our citizens thought the steamer was playing when the water was shut off.

Charley Tay gave the men refreshments at the close of their arduous labors.

One of the reservoir covers in the Square was frozen, and several minutes were lost in trying to remove it.

MAY 13, 1877

FIRES.

Last Sunday morning at 2 o'clock, the residence of Mr. Richard Barnes, on Main street, near Spot pond, was discovered to be on fire. The alarm was given, and the fire department called out. The building was entirely consumed before the companies reached the spot. The house had been repaired, and was just ready for occupancy.

An alarm Monday afternoon called the department to Chas. Emerson's shoe manufactory on Emerson street. When the H. & L. Co. arrived the fire had gained considerable headway, having burned through the roof near the chimney. After vain attempts to throw water upon the flames with buckets, the Johnson pump, belonging to the H. & L. Co. was brought into requisition, and the blaze extinguished. The steamer was drawn by volunteers to the reservoir in Central square, and would have been ready to do ample execution had the fire spread. The Gen. Worth was stationed at the reservoir in the rear of the Congregational church. On few occasions has the fire department been on the spot, and ready for work as soon as at this fire.

Smoke was seen coming from the rear of Chase Bros. block Saturday evening shortly before 9 o'clock, and an alarm was given. The fire companies were quickly on the spot, but the smoke was found to be rising from a pile of brush.

An unoccupied house near the track of the Lowell railroad, in East Woburn was burned last Sunday evening.

C. O. Tay was insured in the "Pennsylvania" for \$900. Allowed \$450 for damages.

Mr. Hazen Whitcher supplied Mr. Goodnow with tar paper to cover his goods with, and thus saved a large proportion.

E. G. Goodnow's stock suffered considerably from water. Insured in the "Niagara" by Amos Hill, Esq. Receives \$250.

G. O. Pillsbury received damages to his furniture and fixings—\$30 worth. Insured in the same company. Settled.

Building insured in the "Prescott." Damages covered by \$325.

Resolute H. & L. Co. has voted to discontinue the use of a horse to convey their carriage to and from fires. The expense of this feature has been borne for several years by the members, and, considering the small remuneration they receive for their services, the company believe that the town should furnish a horse for that purpose.

Fire.

About five o'clock on Tuesday morning, an alarm of fire was given calling out the fire department. The burning building was found to be the two-story house on Gould street, owned and occupied by W. A. Bartlett. When the firemen arrived, the fire had not burned through, but apparently had completely enveloped the building between the inside and outside walls, a most difficult place for firemen to reach. They however soon succeeded in subduing the flame before it had gained volume sufficient to burst out, notwithstanding it had damaged the inside to a considerable extent. Mr. Bartlett succeeded in removing most of his furniture from the destructive elements, fire and water. Praise is due the fire department for the energy, perseverance and success in controlling the fire. The origin of the fire is thought to be from a defective chimney. Damage estimated at \$800. Insured in the Audover Insurance Company for \$1,200. Mr. Bartlett says he arose at four o'clock to regulate the fire in the cook stove, and again retired to bed. At half-past four hearing a strange noise he arose and opening a closet door the flames met him. The family were at once aroused, and the alarm given. At such a time nerve is required.

Mr. Bartlett's family consisted of himself, wife, five children and parents. The family had much of their clothing burned. Stella the oldest daughter returned twice to the burning house after the family left it and secured two armsfull of her clothing, and would have returned for the third but for the blinding smoke and fire which excluded the possibility. The weather was quite cold, and during the work of extinguishing the fire, Mr. Jefferson Hayes furnished the firemen with hot coffee, which was thankfully received.

—Mr. Bartlett whose house was partially burned on Tuesday morning last, is not responsible to the town for water used in extinguishing the fire, as it was taken from the private reservoir of Jefferson Hayes, and thus their success.

A Card.

The undersigned take pleasure in publicly expressing their thanks to the officers and members of the Fire Department of Stoneham, for their efficient aid and untiring efforts to rescue our property from destruction by fire on the morning of the 19th inst. Also to the neighbors and friends for their timely aid and the many substantial tokens of their sympathy. Each and all will please accept an honest, heartfelt "thank you."

MR. and MRS. W. A. BARTLETT.
Stoneham, February 22, 1878.

Fire.

About twenty minutes before 12 o'clock, on Thursday night, the alarm of Fire in district No. 1, was sounded, calling out the entire fire department. The burning building was a barn on Warren street, owned by Mr. Wm. Hurd, and occupied by Mr. J. W. Swint. The fire had made good headway when discovered by a near neighbor, who was sitting up late finishing up some work, and who immediately gave the alarm, but before the engines arrived to play, the building was burned out, although but a short time had elapsed from the time the alarm was given. The building was a total loss, insured. Mr. Swint lost his bread wagon, a Concord wagon, nice pigs, harnesses, hay and grain. One horse burned up with the building, one rescued, but so badly burned that it was found necessary to kill him the next day. Mr. Swint had an insurance on his property, which will but partially cover his loss. A brother of Mr. Swint was badly burned in taking the horse from the stable. The fire was undoubtedly by the work of an incendiary or tramp.

Fire.

Holocaust of Horses, Cattle and Swine.

About 3 o'clock Wednesday morning the barn of Cornelius Doyle, farmer, who lives on the north side of Broadway, in the east part of the town, was discovered to be on fire. The alarm was immediately given, but the bad roads greatly retarded the firemen, and on the arrival of the Gen. Worth engine and Hook and Ladder truck, the barn was level with the ground. The Cyrus Wakefield engine company of Wakefield also came over to the Stoneham line. The barn was in an isolated position, and the only water to be had in the vicinity was from two wells, the contents of which was quickly emptied on the burning embers by the Gen. Worth engine. The entire contents of the barn,—23 head of cattle, 3 horses, 12 hogs, 18 tons of hay, over a ton of grain, and a large lot of farming implements were also burned. It is not known how the fire originated. On the barn there was an insurance of \$900, and also insurance on the stock.

On account of the heavy roads the steamer Col. Gould, drawn by four of Richardson's horses, only went as far as Huntress' mill. The hose carriage, drawn by one of Mrs. Berry's horses, got as far as the cemetery. The hose used at the fire was loaned by the Cyrus Wakefield engine company. J. W. Dean, keeper of the poor farm, attached two of his horses to the Gen. Worth rope, when the engine was homeward bound, for which act the firemen feel greatly indebted.

A Promising Blaze.

At half-past eleven Thursday night the fire department were summoned to Central Square, to subdue a fire in a barn belonging to and in rear of the Whittier-estate. The barn is situated but a few feet from the printing office, and the fire was raging in the loft. A quick response by the department, and excellent management by the engineers, soon brought the flames under control and allayed the fears of the business men in the vicinity and hundreds of spectators. Quite a heavy rain storm prevailed, and prevented a rapid spread of the flames. The Gen. Worth took position at the large reservoir in Central Square, and running their hose through Whittier's store, did prompt and effective work in controlling the flames until the steamer Col. Gould, which was stationed at the other reservoir, brought two streams to bear on the building, and did the business up quick. The members of the H. & L. Company were as spry as athletes, and the department worked together like a charm. The barn was valued at about \$250. The horse was in James Forrest's stable, who had used it the previous day. A buggy and some of the other contents was removed.

The origination of the fire is unknown. Parties living in the vicinity observed a stranger prowling around Block street, and Mrs. F. L. Whittier heard the barn door open and close before flames illuminated the place. Chas. Desormeaux, carriage-painter, sleeps in the west end of his shop, and the reflection shone into his room. He jumped out of bed and opening the window

gave the alarm. If it was the work of an incendiary, he chose a good night and seasonable hour for his work. One hour later, when people were sound asleep, and a disastrous conflagration might have been the result. Strong puffs of wind blew blazing shingles a hundred yards from the barn, but the dampness prevented their doing any damage.

The same night, it is supposed after the above fire, an attempt was made to fire the wood shed of Mr. John Marcy on Central street, located in rear of his store. A piece of dry wood was whittled into shavings, and placed in the wood pile, but it only charred and smoked the wood before going out. Mrs. Packard, who resides in the house, heard some one in the shed, but thought it was her husband. In the morning that an incendiary had been around was plain.

There are some features of the burning worthy of note.

1st. The efficiency of the fire department, which was remarked by everyone who saw the work done. We can safely say we never saw the members do such work anywhere, and it would be impossible for any department, with the same facilities, to do better, if as well. No formal card of thanks would express our feelings towards the members of the fire department.

2d. The locality: This was the spot so long dreaded by the firemen and engineers. Whether it was chosen by design or accident, the incendiary started the fire just where the most disastrous results were to be apprehended. If the fire had got fairly under way in the printing office (as it was, the building was scorched, and a great many

lights cracked by the heat) and thence conveyed to the main building, the heat engendered in the burning of such a large wooden mass would have been tremendous. The Odd Fellow's building adjoins it on one side, and Ma whinney's factory on the other; what could have saved them? Then there are thirty or more wooden buildings in the immediate vicinity, south, north, and east, which, looking at it as favorably as we may, it would be impossible to save. What a great conflagration a little fire might kindle!

3d. In case of such a fire spreading, what are our water facilities, if we had the assistance of half a dozen engines besides our own? This filling up from one cistern to another is child's play, and a better supply of water is ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY!

Fire.

About 5:15 yesterday morning an alarm of fire was sounded (just seven months and fourteen days since the last alarm), which was quickly responded to by the department. Hastily making their way to the residence of Dennis Daley on Pine street, the flames were seen bursting out between the L and the cottage. It was but a very short time before the department got to work, the Gen. Worth drawing water from the hydrant rear of Franklin street depot, and the steamer Col. Gould from the Central square reservoir, the H. & L. company preparing the way for the firemen to reach the flames more readily. After an hour's hard work the flames were subdued, but not before the house had been completely gutted and deluged with water. Chief Down, Assistants Hency and Willey, were on hand, directing the operations of the firemen. The first alarm was sounded by the whistle of the locomotive, and then Tidd's whistle belched forth in tones that awoke the soundest slumberer. A large number of citizens turned out, the location of the fire seeming so near Tidd's tannery, many thought it was part of their extensive shops.

The inmates succeeded in removing a large part of the furniture, but the bedding, clothes, etc., were burned and damaged. The fire is supposed to have caught from a defect in the chimney, as it was first discovered in a closet adjoining the chimney. It spread very rapidly. We understand the house was insured for \$650.

Chiefs of the Stoneham Fire Department



Chief William F. McCall
1927 – 1948



Chief William E. Crosby
1948 – 1967



Chief Raymond L. Sorenson
1967 – Present

Chief Raymond L. Sorenson

Chief Engineers of the Stoneham Fire Department

1857 – 1912

B. F. Richardson	1857
Orin Hersam	1858-9-60
Onslow Gilmore	1861-2-3-4-5
Charles C. Dike	1866-7
Orin Hersam	1868
Wm. C. Dustin	1869
Wm. F. Walker	1870-1
Onslow Gilmore	1872
Wm. H. Eastman	1873-4-5
Moses Downs	1876-7-8-9
E. R. Seaver	1880-1
Orin A. Dodge	1882-3
E. R. Seaver	1884-5-6
Orin A. Dodge	1887-8-9-90-1
G. E. Sturtevant	1892 to 1911
Albert J. Smith	1912 to 1927

Permanent Members of the Stoneham Fire Department

1912-1975

	Date of Permanent Appointment	Retired	
Stillman Crouch	1912	1925	
Albert J. Smith	1919	1927	
Herbert E. Plummer	1921	1952	
Joseph Tansey	1923	1946	
Daniel W. Poore	1923	1937	Died while mem. of Dept.
William F. McCall	1925	1948	
Dick Ervin	1927	1950	
William Plummer	1927	1952	
Henry Thorn	1927	1949	Died while mem. of Dept.
William E. Crosby	1937	1967	
John Graham	1942	1970	
William McCall	1942	1974	
Louis Longo	1946	1948	Disability rec. on duty
James J. McDermott	1946	1960	
Charles Whitcher	1946	1970	
Henry J. Crosby	1948	1962	Disability
William Vayo	1948	1969	Disability
Russell Holden	1949		
Robert Marshall	1949		
Walter McDonald	1949	1954	
Val. Matogno	1949	1966	
Raymond Sorensen	1949		
Francis Wells	1949	1972	Disability-heart
George Whitcher	1949	1967	
William J. Meegan	1950		
James Bowman	1952		
Albert Duff	1952	1974	Died while mem. of Dept.
George Grafton	1952	1971	Disability-lungs, Smoke Inh.
William Hannaford	1952	1965	
Clarence Malonson	1952	1975	
John Marshall	1952	1973	Disability-heart
Fred H. Abbott	1953	1967	
Charles Beckwith	1953	1970	
George Downes	1953		
John Hubbard	1953	1973	
Warren Newcomb	1953		
John Judge	1954	1972	Disability-heart
Philip W. Carroll	1960	1974	Disability-heart
George Emery	1960		
James McDermott, Jr.	1960		
Earl F. Potter	1960	1973	Disability-Smoke Inh.
Henry D'Entremont	1963		
Henry Sutermeister	1965	1967	Died while mem. of Dept.
William Abbott	1967		
Paul Bears	1967		
Charles Fitzgerald	1967		
Robert O'Melia	1967		
William McLaughlin	1967		
Stanton Waite	1967		
Kevin Wynne	1967		
Charles Antinoro	1969		
William Dockery	1969		
Francis Gould	1969		
Francis Hudson	1969		
James Regan	1969		
William Kelley	1969		
Robert Kirby	1970		
Edward Manuel	1970		
<hr/>			
		William Crosby, Jr.	1971
		John Fullerton	1971
		Leon Curley	1972
		Charles Greenleaf	1972
		Samuel Earle, Jr.	1973
		James Halpin	1973
		William Kullman	1973
		Richard LeBlanc	1973
		George Sowyrda, Jr.	1973
		David Bettencourt	1974
		Francis Brown	1974
		Paul Burditt	1974
		Robert Dunphy	1974

Stoneham Fire Apparatus 1834-1975

YEAR	PURCHASE PRICE	NAME NUMBER	TYPE	BUILDER	DISPOSAL
1834	250.00	Phoenix	Hand Tub	Thayer	Scrapped 1855
1849	1,000.00	Gen. Worth	Hand Tub	Hunnerhan	Sold to Goffstown 1885
1855		Resolute	Hook & Ladder	B.E. Richarson W.W. Child	Turned in on new ladder 1881
1870	4,000.00	Col. Gould	Steam Engine	Hunneman	Turned in on new steamer 1891
1870	700.00	Col. Gould	Hose Carriage	Hunnerman	Turned in on new wagon 1889
1873	950.00		H.H.C.	Hunnerman	
1881	500 & 100 T.I.	Resolute	H. & L.	Pollar & Park Wob.	
1886	330.00	E.R.Seavers #3	Hose Wagon	T.T. Marston Stoneham	
1889	250.00	Gen. Worth	Hose Wagon	R.D. Wall	
1890	300.00	Col. Gould	Hose Wagon	R.D. Wall	
1891	3,500.00	Col. Gould	Steam Engine	Manchest Loc W.	Sold in 1927 to Boston Contractor
1896		E.R.Seavers #3	Hose Wagon	Abbott Downing	
1904	585.00	Hose #1	Chem & Hose		Body used as part of Reo.
1905	450.00	Hose #2	Hose Wagon		
1912	5,775.00	Comb. A	Hose & Chem Wagon	Seagrave	
1921	12,000.00	Eng. #1	750 G.P.M.	Seagrave	Gibon farm Reading
1923	9,500.00	Lad. #1	City Service	Seagrave	Sold to Bethal Vermont
1924	1,350.00	Reo.	Brush Truck	Stoneham F.D.	Newhall farm Saco, Maine
1931	5,800.00	Eng. #2	600 G.P.M.	Seagrave	1962 Mr. Knox Littleton, Mass.
1944	16,285.00	Lad. # 1	65' Aerial	Seagrave	Sold to N.J. Man
1940	9,275.00	Eng. #7	750 G.P.M.	Seagrave	Sold to B. McColligan Pelham New Hampshire
1945	4,450.00	Eng. #4	200 G.P.M.	Dodge	Sold to Knox brothers
1953	17,900.00	Eng. #1	750 G.P.M.	Seagrave	In Service
1956	19,900.00	Eng. #5	750 G.P.M.	Seagrave	In Service
1962	12,000.00	Eng. #4	200 G.P.M. Brush Tk.	Dodge	In Service
1969	57,000.00	Lad. #1	85' Aerial	Pirsch	In Service
1972	48,000.00	Eng. #2	1,000 G.P.M.	Pirsch	In Service

Major Fires in Stoneham

Sept. 3, 1877		R. C. Huntress Planing & Moulding Mill, Pomeworth Street Total Loss: \$35,000	June 25, 1914	Box 8	Call to Salem Comb. A and crew of 10 went 12 miles over road to Salem
Aug. 6, 1880		M. H. Fitzgerald Curry- ing Shop & Dwelling, Hancock Street Total Loss \$35,000	Sept. 25, 1920	Box 63	Symmes Block, Main & Minot St. Fought fire 6 hours Loss: \$25,000
March 11, 1881		Call to Wakefield for fire in Wakefield Rat- tan Works Loss: \$500,000	May 16, 1923	Box 63	DeFerrari Building & Wills Store, Central Square Fought for 4 hours Loss: \$35,000
May 4, 1900	Box 62	Called to Wakefield for fire in Wakefield Rattan Works Steamer Hose 4 and Ladder 1	June 29, 1923		Crystal Shoe Co. Main & Union St. Fought for 4 hours Loss: \$30,000
April 1, 1902		Hotel Langwood fire Spot Pond Loss: \$50,000	Jan. 26, 1933	Box 63	Will's Block, Central Square General Alarm — Help from Arlington, Malden, Medford, Melrose, Read- ing, Wakefield, Winches- ter, Woburn Loss: \$50,000
July 5, 1903	Box 63	Central, Block, Emer- son & Fuller Streets, Six businesses destroyed			
April 12, 1908	Box 62	Called to Chelsea Stea- mer & Hose Co. Returned April 13th at 3:00 P.M.	Jan. 24, 1935	Box 63	W. T. Grant Co., Whit- ney's Drug, Stoneham Spa, S. K. Ames General Alarm Loss: \$3,000
Nov. 13, 1908	Box 62	Shawmut Motor Com- pany, Pine & Tidd Street Wakefield responded Fire fought seven hours	Dec. 29, 1938	Box 641	Catholic Church General Alarm Reading, Wakefield, Melrose
March 24, 1909		Methodist Church Fire Central Street Wakefield & Winches- ter sent Steamer & Hose Co.	Sept. 8, 1939	Box 471	Bear Hill Golf Club, Second Alarm Help from Wakefield
Sept. 22, 1910	Box 44	Vera Chemical Fire, Central Street Reading, Woburn, Winchester Fire fought 7½ hours	Feb. 14, 1940	Box 63	Bell Block Main Street General Alarm Malden, Medford, Melrose, Reading, Winchester, Woburn Loss: \$50,000
Nov. 16, 1912	Box 28	Connell Patent Leather Shop, Spring Street Wakefield responded	Jan. 24, 1945	Box 54	Stoneham Infirmary Second Alarm Wakefield, Reading and Melrose
Feb. 18, 1913	Box 44	Healy Bros. Shoe Factory Loss: \$50,000			

Major Fires in Stoneham (Continued)

Sept. 27, 1948		18 Chestnut Street, Two Alarm 3 Children Died	April 25, 1962	Box 47	Midnight Foodland, Main & North St. General Alarm
Dec. 3, 1952	Box 44	Victory Block (Shapiro) Second Alarm Wakefield, Melrose	June 29, 1963	Box 61	Reading, Wakefield, Melrose, Winchester R. R. Freight Shed, Pine Street General Alarm
Jan. 1, 1954	Box 46	House Explosion 40 West Street Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Keene killed	Jan. 8, 1965	Box 632	Reading, Wakefield, Melrose, Winchester Redmen's Hall Second Alarm
Jan. 13, 1955	Box 37	M.D.C. Pumping Sta- tion, Spot Pond Second Alarm	Aug. 10, 1965	Box 642	Mann Chemical Second Alarm
Oct. 23, 1956	Box 3521	Sunshine Nursing Home Ambulances responded Reading, Winchester, Woburn, M.D.C. Res. trucks from Wakefield, Winchester	May 8, 1968	Box 372	Walker Tonic Plant General Alarm Reading, Winchester, Melrose, Wakefield, Woburn, Lynnfield
Sept. 12, 1957	Box 63	Redmen's Hall, Winter Street General Alarm Reading, Wakefield, Melrose, Winchester	Feb. 27, 1969	Box 47	China Moon, Main Street General Alarm
Oct. 6, 1957	Box 44	Fredrick's Drug Store, Main Street General Alarm Reading, Wakefield, Winchester, Melrose 7 men to hospital	Dec. 18, 1970		Farm Hill Shopping Ct., Main Street General Alarm
Oct. 14, 1957	Box 44	Superior Electric Co., Main Street, General Alarm Reading, Wakefield, Winchester, Melrose, Woburn	Dec. 12, 1971	— High School	} Box 81 Mutual Aid to Wakefield
Sept. 20, 1958	Box 63	Stoneham Shoe Mart, Main Street Second Alarm Reading	Jan. 13, 1972	— Pat's Restaurant	
June 19, 1959	Box 63	Stoneham Shoe Mart, Main Street Second Alarm Reading, Wakefield	Feb. 6, 1972	— Robie Indst. Park	
			Mar. 13, 1972	— Diskay Dept. Store	
			Apr. 16, 1972	— Hazelwood Cottage	
			Jan. 8, 1973	Box 212	Temple Judeau, 188 Franklin Street Second Alarm
			Nov. 7, 1973		Stoneview Apts., Main Street General Alarm
			Jan., 1975		M.D.C. Pumping Station, Spot Pond General Alarm



Some Oldtime Volunteers



Chief Sturtevant



Fire in S. P. Finnegan's Store, July, 1911



General Worth Hand Tub in 1925 – 200th Anniversary Parade



Lt. Henry Thorn, Dept. Chief Joseph Tansey and Al Duff with Ladder 1, 1945



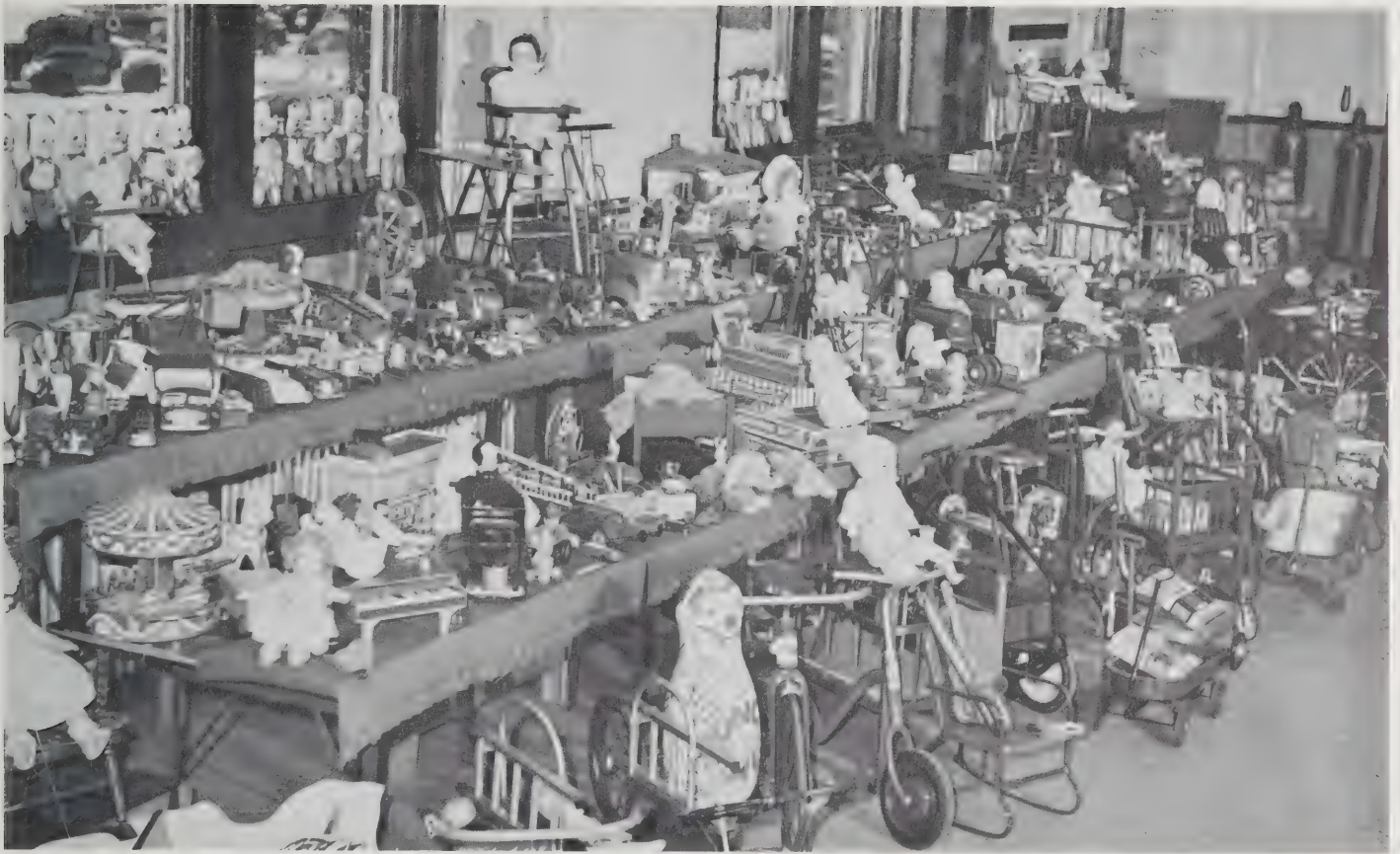
Christmas Lighting on Stoneham Fire Station



Chief Raymond Sorenson Presenting Commendation to (left to right) Lt. Charles Beckwith, James Bowman, Russell Holden and John Judge for Discovery of a Fire at Old Junior High School While Returning to Quarters from a Previous Alarm.



OOPS! Work of the Fire Department Was Not Always Just Fires. Raymond Sorenson and Jim McDermott Wash Down Gas Spill.



Some of the Toys Reconditioned by the Members of the Stoneham Fire Department for Distribution to the Needy Children of Stoneham at Christmas.



Pumping Out Flooded Cellars During the 1954 Rains – Earl Potter in his Wading Pool.



Another Pumping Job But For A Different Purpose – Apparatus Using Suction Hose to Draw Water From Spot Pond While Battling the M.D.C. Pumping Station Fire. Stoneham Engine 5, Wakefield Engine 2, Stoneham Engine 1 – Russ Holden is Pictured with Engine 1.



View of Cellar of Fredrick Drug Store Where Nine Firefighters Were Overcome by Carbon Monoxide.



House Fire on Harrison Street – Bill Abbott on Ladder, Melrose Firefighters on Roof.



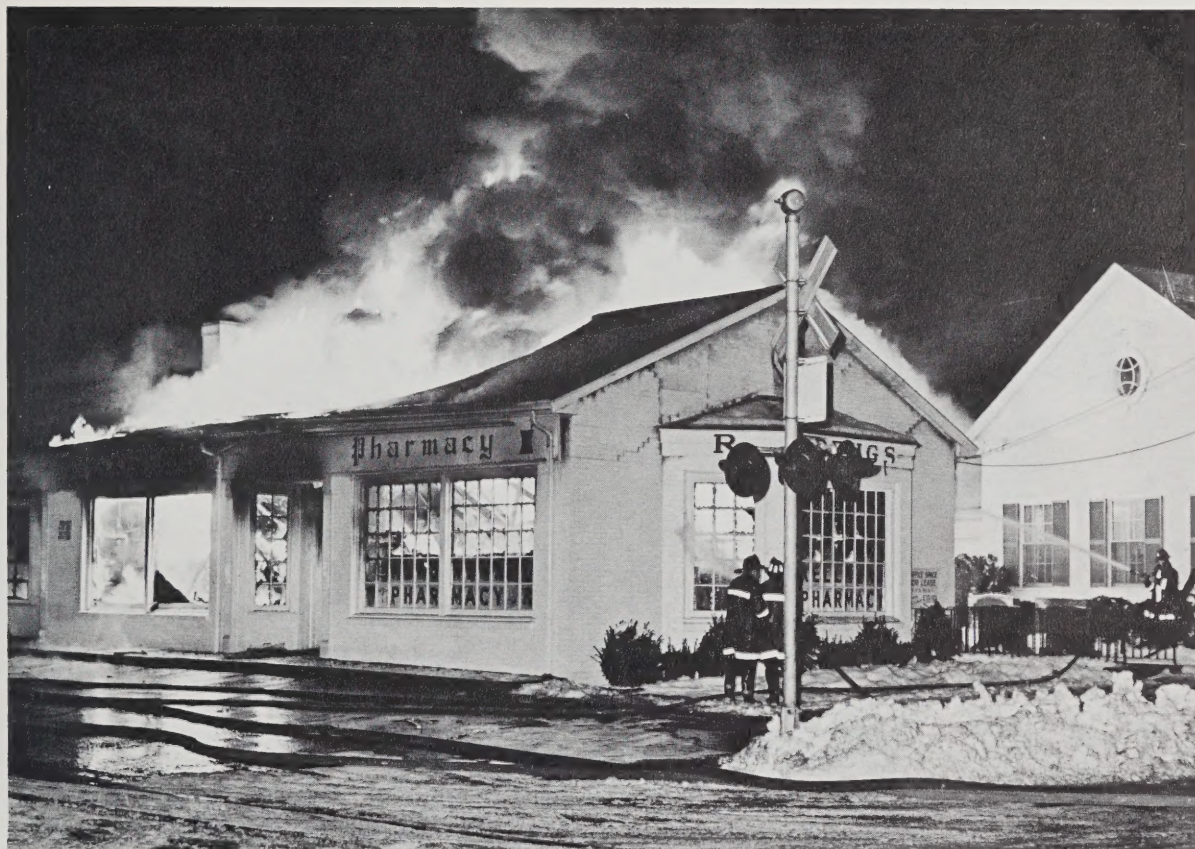
This Abandoned House on Montvale Avenue Made a Spectacular Fire (left to right) Lt. William McLaughlin, Richie LeBlanc, Clarence Malonson and Capt. James McDermott.



Firefighters Battling Night Fire.



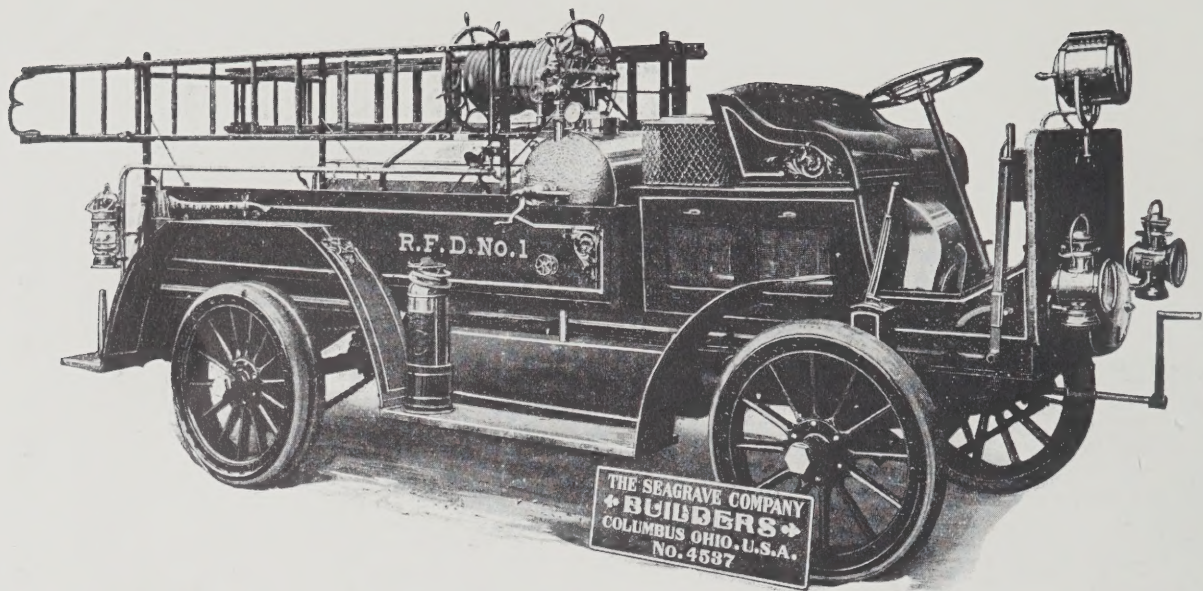
Advancing 2½ Line While Battling a Stubborn Fire at Walker's Tonic are (left to right) Henry D'Entremont, Bill Abbott and Charles Fitzgerald.



Kelner's Drug Store Fire in Farm Hill Shopping Center on Main Street, December 18, 1970.



Fire Caused by a Gas Explosion, December 19, 1969, 6 Sunset Road.



Boston, Mass. ~~Columbus, Ohio~~, July 2, 1912.

Town of Stoneham, Mass.

Gentlemen:

We hereby propose and agree to manufacture for you after your acceptance of this proposition, and the signing and execution of the accompanying contract,

THE APPARATUS AND EQUIPMENT

herein named and described; same to be built and shipped in accordance with the specifications hereto attached, for the sum of

Five thousand, seven hundred and seventy-five dollars (\$5,775.00)

Specifications and Memoranda attached hereto form a part of this proposal and contract and are subject to changes desired by the purchaser, provided such alterations are interlined prior to the signing of these papers and do not materially affect the cost of the construction of the apparatus.

THE SEAGRAVE COMPANY,

By *Geo. L. Fidsbury*
Agent



MEMBERS OF STONEHAM DEPARTMENT - JUNE 8, 1975

FRONT ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT) LT. WILLIAM McLAUGHLIN, LT. CHARLES FITZGERALD, LT. WILLIAM MEEGAN, LT. GEORGE DOWNES, CHIEF RAYMOND SORENSON, CAPT. FRANK GOULD, CAPT. JAMES McDERMOTT, CAPT. GEORGE EMERY, CAPT. WILLIAM ABBOTT.

ROW 2, CHARLES GREENLEAF, JAMES BOWMAN, WILLIAM KELLEY, RICHARD LeBLANC, WILLIAM KULLMAN, BERNARD ARSENAULT, DOUGLAS GRIFFIN, WILLIAM DOCKERY.

ROW 3, WALTER JOHNSON, WARREN NEWCOMB, RUSSELL HOLDEN, JAMES HALPIN, WILLIAM CARR, DAVID BETTENCOURT, JOHN SCULLIN, JOHN FULLERTON, CLARENCE MELONSON.

ROW 4, LEON CURLEY, CHARLES ANTINORO, FRANCIS BROWN, STANTON WAITE, GEORGE SOWYRDA, PAUL BURDITT, EDWARD MANUEL, FRANCIS HUDSON, KEVIN WYNNE.

ROW 5, ROBERT MARSHALL, ROBERT O'MELIA, RICHARD MARENGI, PAUL COURTENAY, MIKE MURPHY, HENRY D'ENTRE-MONT, ROBERT DUNPHY, PAUL BEARS, SAM EARLE.

UNABLE TO BE PRESENT FOR THIS PICTURE WAS JAMES REGAN.

